BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 101 BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 32 | PRICE ₹5*

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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At SCO meet, in presence of Pak minister, defence minister Rajnath Singh says, 'Op Sindoor demonstrated India's firm resolve that terror epicentres will be meted out justifiable punishment... We shouldn't allow it to become an era of violence... but of peace & prosperity'

Jimmy Kimmel says his joke about Melania Trump had been misconstrued and was not a "call to assassination", hours after prez Trump said the comedian should be fired for likening the US First Lady to an "expectant widow"

Bangladesh enters the era of nuclear power generation as its Rooppur N-plant begins fuel loading in its VVER-1200 reactor — latest Russian Gen III+ pressurised water reactor tech that India is eyeing for its future N-plants

Half-centuries from Yashasvi Jaiswal and Donovan Ferreira and a fiery knock from Sooryavanshi **help Rajasthan Royals end Punjab Kings' unbeaten run**, beating them by 6 wickets

DOUBLE DELIGHT

Today's issue of **TOI** is organised in two sections, both equally packed with news and analysis.
To get the full reading experience of today's edition, make sure you don't miss the other section

OTHER BOOK TOP STORIES

- **Govt mulls negative scoring for staff postings to curb graft**
- **K'taka bans obscene songs, dances in school events**
- **Strict dress code spurs niche market for NEET-ready outfits**

BJP sweeps Guj municipal polls, wins all 15 corpns

BJP continues to prevail over Gujarat's political landscape as it swept the local body polls on Tuesday, winning all 15 municipal corporations and 78 of the 84 municipalities, reiterating its dominance in cities and towns. It also posted a spectacular performance in villages, winning 33 of the 34 district panchayats and 220 of the 260 taluk panchayats. Both AAP and Congress staked claims as No.2 party in the state. **P 5**

Loco pilot reverses train 4km to safety

A loco pilot reversed a passenger train nearly 4km after spotting flames from stubble burning racing towards the tracks on Gwalior-Indore line on Monday, averting a potential tragedy. **P 5**

Baraat blocks NH, FIR against groom

After youths rode atop moving vehicles, hung out of windows and blocked NH-919 in Haryana's Nuh, the groom, his father and others were named in an FIR. Police arrested five. TNN

'DISCREPANCY LIST': 27L; CLEARED TO VOTE: 1,607

West Bengal Votes In Phase 2 Of State Assembly Elections Today	
Polling Stations	36,341
Total Seats	142
SC Seats	34
ST Seats	1
Total Candidates	1,448
Women Candidates	218 (15%)
Total Voters	3.2cr
Male Voters	1.6cr
Female Voters	1.6cr
3rd Gender Voters	792

Source: ECI, ADR (for women candidates)

Election officials take a selfie after collecting polling material in Barasat

- **2.3L+** CAPF personnel, **38,297** state police, **142** general observers, **95** police observers, **100** expenditure observers, and NIA teams across sensitive zones
- Supreme Court-mandated appellate tribunals hearing voter deletions during EC's special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bengal restore voting rights of 1,468 people, taking **total reinstatements to 1,607**. The **roll revision disenfranchised 27 lakh people** under the 'logical discrepancy' clause
- In Varanasi, **PM Modi says women came out in large numbers to vote** in the assembly elections in five states/UTs **to teach a lesson to 'parivarvaadi (dynastic)' opposition parties**, which he claims were against the entry of more women into legislative bodies
- **IPS officer Ajay Pal Sharma, known as 'Singham'** in UP, visits house of Falta's Trinamool candidate Jahangir Khan and **warns his kin 'to be cautious'**. Undaunted Jahangir says, **'If he is Singham, I am Pushpa**. Jhukega nahi. In Jahangir's dictionary, the word fear does not exist'
- **HC reminds EC of citizen's fundamental right to liberty** and hopes EC will not resort to preventive detentions or arrests

CAPF KNOCKS ON KOLKATA MAYOR'S HOUSE AT MIDNIGHT

CAPF jawans, led by a commandant, knocked on the door of Kolkata mayor Firhad Hakim well past Monday midnight and **reportedly advised Hakim to refrain from intimidation** of voters. Angry Hakim asks if the CAPF officials had the authority to reach a candidate's home at midnight and 'harass' him. **'I have never seen such activism on part of central force personnel** during any election... I strongly condemn this," Hakim said. **CAPF sources said it was a routine drill** and there was no targeted knocking.

P 6 & OTHER BOOK, P 8

CM will step down if Rahul asks, says MLA

Congress MLA and former minister KN Rajanna Tuesday said Siddaramaiah is willing to step down as CM — if directed by Rahul Gandhi. Urging the Congress high command to clear the confusion on the leadership issue, Rajanna, who is close to Siddaramaiah, warned that continued uncertainty would be detrimental for the party and governance. **P 4**

Judge in Kejriwal row recuses from Karti case

Justice Swarana K Sharma of Delhi HC Tuesday recused herself from hearing Congress MP Karti Chidambaram's plea seeking quashing of a criminal case lodged by CBI against him, citing a "gross delay" of nearly two decades. The same bench had refused to recuse from a case involving Kejriwal. Justice Sharma said the matter be listed before another bench, and posted it for July 21. **P 5**

Dawood aide brought back from Turkiye

Central agencies and NCB brought back drug trafficker and Dawood henchman **Mohammed Salim Dola** from Istanbul on Tuesday, ending a two-year-long manhunt that spanned several countries. His arrest indicates a major blow to Dawood Ibrahim's narcotics network. **Other bk, P 7**

Digi arrest scams: WA to flag misuse of official logos

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New Delhi: Social media major WhatsApp has told the Union govt that it has deployed AI-based logo detection and media matching system to identify and remove accounts impersonating law enforcement agencies to threaten senior citizens with 'digital arrest' and rob them of their life savings.

Attorney general R Venkataramani filed the status report on behalf of Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), operating under home ministry, after the interdepartmental panel deliberated measures to curb "digital arrest" scams with department of telecom, RBI, ministry of information technology, representatives of telecom service providers and WhatsApp.

The statement of WhatsApp is significant as the encrupted messaging service has been used in diverse jurisdictions to avoid detection.

▶Mitigate scam calls, P 7

CLOSING GAPS

- WhatsApp says its **warning mechanisms identify impersonation patterns** and alert users in suspicious interactions
- Centre says **service providers must prevent misuse of multiple identities** by an individual while buying more than one SIM
- Biometric-vetted **cross-operator SIM monitoring system by Dec 2026**

ATS probes 'lone wolf' knife attack on two security guards in Mumbai

Mira Bhayander (Mumbai): A day after a 31-year-old man was arrested for stabbing two security guards at an under-construction site in Mira Road's Naya Nagar, it emerged that he had allegedly asked them to identify their religion before stabbing them, **reports Vishal Rajemahadik**.

The assailant, Zaib Zubair Ansari, was handed over by local cops to the Mumbai Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) Monday afternoon. A local court has remanded Ansari to ATS custody till May 4.

While agency reports quoted ATS officials as saying the incident appeared to be a 'lone wolf' attack, Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis said the attacker had been "self-radicalised". One of the injured guards, Rajkumar Mishra (50), who was grievously injured, is in ICU in a local hospital and is stable, while the other, Subroto Sen (31), who suffered minor injuries, filed a complaint at Naya Nagar police station.

Police said Ansari had been living for several years in the US, where he completed his graduation. He returned to India in 2020 and rented a house in Mira Road, where he has been living alone. Late Monday evening, ATS and the forensic team checked Ansari's rented house on the third floor of a building nearby and seized digital devices like his laptop and mobile phones.

'SELF-RADICALISED'

- **Zaib Zubair Ansari, 31, studied biology in the US**, married a US citizen of Indian origin, now divorced
- **ATS officials called it a 'lone wolf' attack;** Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis said he was "self-radicalised"
- **Digital evidence like laptop and mobile phones seized from his house;** it had references to Islamic State, a letter mentioning an attack

▶References to IS, P 7

'Inept probe': SC acquits 12 lifers in 2008 murder case

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Tuesday came to the rescue of 12 life convicts, who had undergone a total sentence of 12 years in jail, acquitting all of them in a 2008 murder case in Assam by holding that proper investigation was not done by police, **reports Amit Anand Choudhary.**

Pointing fault in the probe, which could have been because of "ignorance, inefficiency or malicious motivation", SC began its verdict by saying "an inept investigation or a scripted enquiry, both are fatal to criminal prosecution...."

▶No proof: Court, P 7

IN THE COURTS

- In Sabarimala case, Hindu party requests 9-judge SC bench to **review 30-yr-old judgment declaring Hinduism as 'way of life'** | **P 5**
- **A J&K court acquits a woman and her alleged partner of charges of murdering her husband** in 2016, citing lack of irrefutable evidence against them | **P 7**
- **A UP court sentences 4** family members—**3 brothers and their 60-yr-old mother — to death** for murdering a 49-yr-old man over debt repayment in 2019 | **P 7**

CBI jt director gets jail for IRS officer assault

A Delhi court has sentenced CBI joint director Ramneesh Geer and retired CBI inspector VK Pandey to three months' jail in a case stemming from a raid on IRS officer Ashok Aggarwal in 2000. The CBI officers forcibly entered the residence of the IRS officer, assaulted, and arrested him. The court found the raid was staged to derail a tribunal order favouring Aggarwal. TNN

ED attaches Anil Ambani's flat, farmhouse

In fresh action against Anil Ambani and his Reliance group entities, ED Tuesday said it has attached his family properties worth another Rs 3,035 crore, including a flat in Usha Kiran building in Mumbai and a farmhouse in Pune, taking attachments to nearly Rs 20,000 crore in the ongoing money laundering case. The agency said a land in Sanand, Ahmedabad, has been also attached. **P 7**

HC adjourns to 2046 a 90-yr-old's defamation case

Bombay HC has adjourned to 2046 a Rs 20-cr defamation suit filed by a woman, who is nearly 90 years old, & her daughter against members of the managing committee of a south Mumbai housing society. The court lamented an ego battle "at the fag end of life" clogging the system. The decade-old dispute arose over the collection of repair funds and the woman being labelled a defaulter. **P 5**

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British PM **Keir Starmer's former chief of staff says appointment of Peter Mandelson as US envoy was a serious error of judgment** and he had advised the PM in support of that selection but had not circumvented the hiring process

Pak court grants bail to PM Shehbaz Sharif's daughter & her husband in a mega corruption and money laundering case after the couple appear before the judge after arriving from UK, where they had gone in 2022 to evade arrest

Union edu minister **Dharmendra Pradhan reviews availability, printing & distribution of NCERT textbooks** for ongoing academic session and directs officials to monitor last-mile delivery, especially in rural areas

Australian govt unveils draft laws that will tax Meta, Google and TikTok unless they strike deals to pay local outlets for news. PM **Anthony Albanese says tech cos will be given a chance to strike deals** with local publishers

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- 'Inept probe': SC acquits 12 lifers in 2008 murder case
- WA to block probe agency logo misuse in digi arrest scams

US cries foul as Iran picked vice-prez for N-treaty meet

Tehran Failed to Adhere To IAEA Norms: Envoy

Srinivas Laxman

Iran's selection to a key post at a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference at the United Nations in New York triggered a sharp showdown Monday, with US, UK, Australia and UAE objecting on opening day.

Iran was elected as one of 34 vice-presidents representing Non-Aligned Movement at the conference led by Vietnam UN envoy Do Hung Viet.

▶ Qatar warns against 'frozen conflict' in Gulf: Times Global

US envoy Christopher Yeaw called the selection "beyond shameful", accusing Iran of contempt for treaty obligations and failure to adhere to International Atomic Energy Agency norms. He alleged Iran continued to advance an N-weapons programme.

Iranian envoy Reza Najafi said, "US is modernising its nuclear weapons" and backing Israel's programme. "US attacked Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities," he said.

REVISED PROPOSAL

- **US has 'no closer friends' than the British, President Trump says, welcoming King Charles III** to the White House on a state visit
- Trump claims **Iran 'has just' informed US that it is in a 'state of collapse'**, wants US to 'open Hormuz Strait'
- **Mediators in Pakistan expect Iran will submit a revised proposal** to end the war in next few days
- **Saudi Arabia hosts leaders, officials from across the Gulf** to discuss the ongoing crisis in the region Times Global

▶N-issue: Other bk, inside jkt

UAE to pull out from OPEC oil cartels

UAE is set to withdraw from the OPEC and OPEC+ oil cartels to focus on "national interests", it announced Tuesday, triggering fresh shockwaves as energy prices continue to soar over the West Asia war. The UAE, one of the world's top oil producers, which has previously chafed at OPEC production quotas, will formally pull out Friday, a statement read. The UAE has been an OPEC member through the emirate of Abu Dhabi since 1967. **P 6**

Saboteur dies while trying to plant IED on tracks in Punjab

Patiala: An ISI-backed Khalistani terror plot boomeranged when an alleged saboteur was killed while planting an IED on the railway tracks in the dedicated freight corridor in Patiala district late Monday night, police said on Tuesday, adding that four members of the terror module were apprehended within 12 hours.

SSP Varun Sharma called it a low-intensity explosion. Police identified the man killed in the blast as Jagroop Singh, 35, a resident of Panjwar village in Punjab's Tarn Taran district. Among the four suspects in custody is Jagroop's younger brother, Satnam Singh. Security has been tightened at major railway hubs, including Ambala Cantonment, Rajpura, and Patiala. TNN

▶ 2nd attack this year, P 7

K'taka govt mulls negative scoring system for regn dept staff postings

Aims To Curb Graft; Transfers Linked To Pending Cases

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Aiming to curb corruption in the stamps and registration department, the state govt has proposed a negative scoring system for posting sub-registrars, senior registration officers and first division assistants, tying career mobility to pending cases and disciplinary records.

Under the new system, officials facing criminal charges, Lokayukta investigations or serious allegations may be transferred prematurely and confined to non-executive or Zone-C postings.

The move follows recent probes that unearthed multi-crore irregularities in property registrations, including a Bengaluru case in Jan in which five sub-registrars were suspended for illegally registering 1,322 properties.

The list included land belonging to Infosys worth Rs 250 crore, with officials accused of misusing the Kaveri 2.0 software and bypassing e-khata norms.

Postings in Bengaluru are widely seen as highly lucrative, with allegations that officials pay hefty sums to secure slots in high-value jurisdictions and later recover the money through illegal collections or so-called "speed money" in return for fast-tracking registrations.

To address this, the draft Karnataka Civil Services (Counselling Based Transfers in Stamps and Registration Department) Rules, 2026, proposes a marks-based system where criminal complaints, Lokayukta cases and departmental inquiries will reduce an officer's overall performance score. Those with higher negative scores will have lower chances of securing preferred postings.

The rules also mandate that transfers be carried out only through a digital counselling system.

DIGI COUNSELLING

- Negative scoring system to decide **postings & promotions of officials** in registration dept
- **Cases and probes will cut chances of prime postings;** digital counselling set to replace transfer lobbying
- Senior sub-registrars and sub-registrars **who completed 5 yrs in Zone A to be moved out**
- FDAs, stenographers who completed 6 years in Zone A to be shifted; **can opt for postings only outside Zone A**

▶Vacancy list: Other bk, P 4

Man carries sis's skeleton to bank

A tribal man dug up the skeletal remains of his sister and carried it to a bank in Odisha to prove she was dead and claim the money she had left behind. A video of Jitu Munda, 50, carrying Kala's remains wrapped in a sack went viral. Munda was given the Rs 19,402 in his sister's account, while the district administration gave him another Rs 30,000 as aid.

Rera orders spur claims against BDA

Rera rulings classifying BDA as a promoter have triggered a surge in compensation claims from Kempegowda Layout allottees over delayed amenities. With 38 complaints filed and many disposed, allottees seek relief for loan burdens. and rent. **Other book, P 3**

Cops suspect B'luru techie died by suicide

Police suspect the 34-year-old software engineer from Dhanbad, Puja Dutta, who was found dead in a decomposed state at her Adugodi home in Bengaluru Monday, had died by suicide. **Other book, P 3**

Airlines to govt: High ATF prices could ground flights

New Delhi: Two days before revision of jet fuel prices, the airline industry has sent an "SOS" to the Centre that it is on the verge of stopping operations, seeking its "urgent intervention" on fuel pricing.

While commercial carriers had won a reprieve last month on ATF (aviation turbine fuel) prices, with the hike in base price for domestic flights capped at 25% and the same for international flights was more than doubled, the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which represents Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has proposed tax reduction to check price surge, amid high global oil prices.

▶ SCI may run vessels to West Asia to help exporters, P 6

It has suggested rational ATF pricing, temporary suspension of 11% excise on ATF for domestic operations and reduction of VAT rates in key states. "India's largest aviation hub — Delhi — has second highest VAT at 25%. Tamil Nadu is highest at 29%. Rates at other major aviation hubs of Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata range between 16% and 20%. These six cities cover more than 50% of airline operations within India. TNN

▶ Airline viability, P 6

NEET look: Strict dress code drives market for new exam-ready outfits

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Bengaluru: With National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) less than a week away, NEET-ready dresses for boys and girls are in big demand. This has led to the birth of a niche market.

On May 3, the day of the test, National Testing Agency conducts strict checks on candidates looking for unseen pockets or hidden buttons where candidates might bury chits or wearable devices in a possible malpractice attempt. This has inspired a NEET line of outfits that tick all boxes and spare last-minute heebie-jeebies for candidates and parents.

Lakhs of students and concerned parents are turning to specially tailored outfits sold in small shops and boutiques in South India.

Most outfits — kurtas paired with pyjamas or leggings for girls — are made from light-colour material. The emphasis is on minimalism: No bells and whistles, no fasteners or no extra layers that could violate dress code. They come with a price tag of Rs 400-Rs 600. It's less about fashion and more about being practical.

▶Big biz: Other bk, P 2

WHAT'S BANNED

- Bits of paper, geometry/ **pencil box, plastic pouch, pen, scale, writing pad, pen drives**, eraser, calculator, log table, electronic pen/scanner
- Bluetooth, **mobile phone, earphones**, microphone, pager, health band
- Wallet, **goggles, belt, cap, handbags, watch, bracelet**, camera; ornaments/metallic items
- All **food items, water bottle**
- Any item that could be used for unfair means by **hiding communication devices**

State bans obscene songs & dances at school events

Bengaluru: The Karnataka school education department has directed govt, aided and unaided schools to ban students from performing obscene songs during school programmes.

In an April 16 directive, the department instructed deputy directors (administration) to enforce the ban strictly and take action against school managements if violations are found. It has asked institutions to ensure students "wear modest attire" while participating in performances.

Schools have been asked to avoid songs considered vulgar and instead use music that is inspiring, value-based and reflective of culture. The department has encouraged the use of songs that promote positive messages, patriotism and cultural heritage. TNN

▶ 'Will affect': Other bk, P 4

'WEAR MODEST ATTIRE'

- Edu dept wants schools **to use songs that promote positive messages, patriotism** and cultural heritage
- Circular **holds headmasters and school managements responsible** for selection of songs and choreography
- Asks **institutions to ensure students 'wear modest attire'** while participating in events

ET The Economic Times

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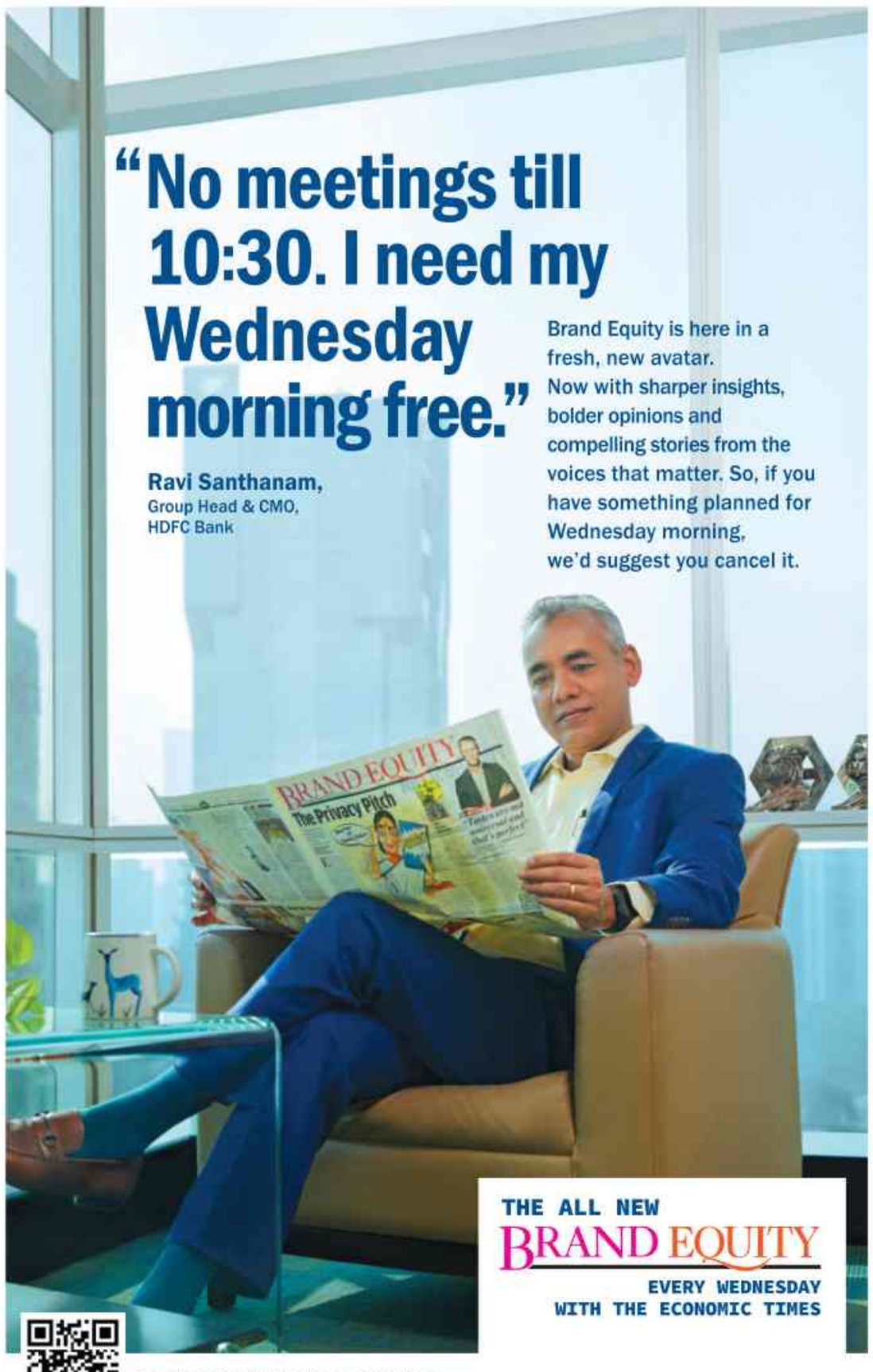

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TOO SWIFT!

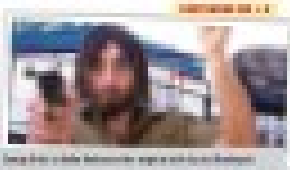
Taylor Swift has broken her own audience records in Singapore with her Eras Tour concert. Here's why the pop star's fans are so crazy about her

A generational trend

Triggered behind the breakneckers

I don't want to remake my own film, says Ghai

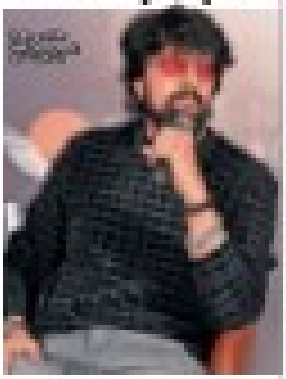
Sir Sanjay Dutt reviews Khalnayak after three decades, Subhash Ghai reveals why he won't direct the sequel, but will lend his vision to the project



Ghai (left) in talks with Sanjay Dutt, who is set to play the antagonist

A What first intrigued me is the negative character was named Ballu — the body language and gait. It's worthy of male villains to get a regal

'Is it OK for us to be so harsh on our own people?'



Buzzstop

DELHI HC PROTECTS PERSONALITY RIGHTS OF ALLU ARJUN

'I never felt the struggle, I enjoyed the dance'

On International Dance Day, Mukesh Tikaria reflects on a journey built on passion and patience

A Each dance just seemed right. It was a natural extension of me. Never a set mindset. I never had to learn, just flow in and start a story

Heat, hostility, locked doors: Life of a census enumerator in Bengaluru

Many Battling Public Apathy & Access Issues

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TOI

ONE GOAL, MANY CHALLENGES

- Census enumerators face suspicion, with even routine questions triggering confrontations during door-to-door surveys
- Access is major hurdle: locked houses & unresponsive residents slow progress toward targets
- Extreme summer heat and physically demanding work conditions add to strain

Bengaluru: "Do you have a radio?" A routine question that census enumerators ask has become emblematic of the daily challenges they face on the ground. The question, part of the official census questionnaire, was met with an angry outburst from the resident of an apartment in Koramangala, who questioned its relevance and accused enumerator Vanitha (name changed on request) of asking "silly" questions.

Despite attempts to explain that she was merely following a prescribed format, the elderly man did not calm down. When she pointed out that non-cooperation could invite legal action, the confrontation escalated, with the resident alleging intimidation.

Later, the issue was resolved after a senior Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) official and another resident, a retired colonel, intervened and made the senior citizen see reason.

Enumerators say such encounters are far from rare. Vanitha said resistance on the part of others and the frustration that followed at her daily grind had become a pattern. "It happens with all of us. I didn't understand why the man got angry over being asked about owning a radio. In fact, people get irritated the moment we begin asking questions. Many seem fed up with answering the survey questions," Vanitha added.

For the first phase of National Census 2027, GBA on April 16 deployed over 25,000 enumerators to conduct door-to-door visits to collect data on 33 different household metrics. The census work is scheduled to end on May 15.

TOI conducted a reality check Tuesday by accompanying a few enumerators in Koramangala 8th Block to understand how challenging the job on hand is.

LOCKED HOUSES

Each enumerator is expected to cover 250 houses by May 15. The time taken to complete a survey per house (by asking all the questions) takes an average of three minutes. In apartments, the time taken is less than three minutes as most questions are skipped.

"But our biggest problem is gaining access. Either houses are locked or the residents do not open the door fearing for their safety," said enumerator Kumar. "We are forced to revisit such houses multiple times. Several residents have also gone away for summer vacation and are not available to answer," he added.

In fact, GBA officials in Koramangala have been making earnest efforts to expand coverage and complete census work in time. Facing pet dogs is another challenge for enumerators when they visit houses.

FATIGUE FACTOR

Fatigue from frequent data collection drives and back-to-back surveys in the state has made Bengalureans less receptive, turning what should be a straightforward exercise into an ordeal for the field staff. "Awareness is the key for comprehensive census data, and that is clearly lacking among the public. None of them are aware of the census, and it is difficult for us to convince them to state their answers. Most of them dismiss us saying they have already answered questions, without realising it was for the caste census undertaken by the state govt earlier," an enumerator said.

SEARING SUMMER

With temperature crossing 36°Celsius, intense heat is a major problem faced by enumerators. "Imagine climbing the stairs of a three-storey building in the searing heat and finding the house locked. It takes a toll on your patience," said an enumerator who did not wish to be named.

TOI learnt that enumerators usually go out early in the morning and work until noon, rest after lunch, and continue their work in the evening. They work more on Saturdays and Sundays hoping to find more residents. While some residents offer the enumerators a seat, water, washroom, and food, a majority are in a rush to get over the questions.

A GBA official said, "We request residents' welfare associations and apartment associations to convey to fellow residents the importance of participating in the national census."

Lizard in paneer tikka? Cabbie hospitalised after bakery visit

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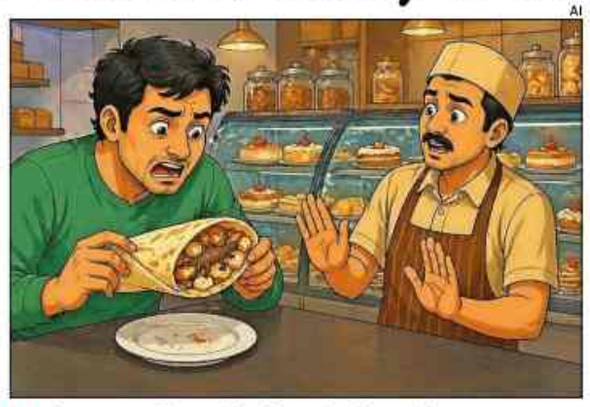
AI



The man alleged he found a lizard in a paneer tikka roll bought at a bakery, and later fell ill. The 32-year-old was hospitalised with vomiting and diarrhoea. Police have registered a case, though no photographic proof was provided

Bengaluru: A 32-year-old man claimed to have found a lizard in the paneer tikka roll he got at a bakery near Housing Board on Magadi Main Road. He later fell sick and had to be hospitalised.

According to the complaint filed by Deepu NK, a resident of Agrahara Dasarahalli and a cab driver, he skipped lunch on April 25 and later stopped at the bakery around 4pm to grab a quick bite. After having a piece of honey cake, he ordered a chicken roll. But as it was out of stock, he ordered a paneer tikka roll.

He alleged that after eating a portion of the roll, he was shocked to find a lizard in it. Shocked, Deepu confronted the staff, which allegedly resulted in a dismissive response, with the staff insisting their premises were clean and asking him to check inside the shop.

While inspecting, Deepu claimed he vomited. After a brief argument, a staff member at the bakery accompanied him to a private multispecialty hospital near Kamakshipalya police station. He got admitted at the hospital, and developed diarrhoea. Doctors told Deepu that he had to be kept under observation for 24 hours and asked him to pay the admission fee at the cash counter.

Deepu claimed the bakery staff denied responsibility and said they could not bear the hospital expenses, instead asked him to accompany them to another hospital where they knew a doctor. Deepu refused and questioned what would happen if his condition deteriorated before reaching another hospital. The victim told police that the bakery had served him food with a lizard, causing harm to his health.

Govindaraja Nagar police registered a case under BNS (for negligent conduct with respect to poisonous substance). A senior officer said the complainant did not produce any proof of the lizard in the food, saying he failed to click a photo in panic after vomiting. The case is under investigation.

Penalty protection for energy producers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

SOLAR, WIND POWER

Bengaluru: The high court has passed an interim order directing authorities to not enforce the revised Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) regulations against the National Solar Energy Federation of India and others, including wind energy producers.

Under CERC's new Deviation Settlement Mechanism (DSM) regime, which came into effect from April 1, stakeholders are required to declare in advance renewable power generation for each pooling station or each generating station for the next day and next week. The DSM regime imposes stringent deviation bands vis-a-vis shortfall or excess electricity supply from the declared value and also contains enhanced penalties.

"Pending consideration of the writ petition and that the petitioners are willing to continue under the earlier DSM regime, the operation of Regulations 6(2)(b) and 8(4) of DSM Regulations, 2024, shall not be enforced against the petitioners to the extent of revised formula and enhanced penalties till the next date of hearing," the court said.

"Deviation of up to 15% shall be governed in terms of the earlier framework and the petitioners shall pay deviation charges," Justice KS Hemalekha observed in her order. The judge ordered notice to the central govt, CERC, Grid controller of India, meteorological department and others and adjourned the hearing to June 10.

The petitioners had argued that DSM framework penalises deviation from scheduled generation to maintain grid discipline but renewable energy generation (solar/wind) is inherently weather-dependent and uncontrollable.

Underpass: Traffic curbs near Wind Tunnel Road for 60 days

Bengaluru: Commuters using Old Airport Road and Indiranagar should brace for temporary traffic restrictions as Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) will begin underpass construction near Wind Tunnel Road Junction (Isro Junction).

Traffic changes will come into effect from May 1 for 60 days. Movement of BMTC buses and heavy vehicles has been restricted on key stretches of Old Airport Road — both from Domlur flyover towards Marathahalli and from SD Road towards Domlur. All vehicles are barred from using 12th Main between Indiranagar 100 Feet Road and 80 Feet Road. TNN

Failed pupils told to sit for SSLC exam-2

Bengaluru: Karnataka govt has made it mandatory for students who failed in SSLC exam 1 to register for the upcoming exam 2.

Issuing instructions to deputy directors across the state, school education and literacy minister S Madhu Bangarappa Monday said steps must be taken to ensure 45,415 students who did not clear the first exam are registered and prepared for the second attempt.

The directive follows the announcement of SSLC results last week, which recorded a historic pass percentage for freshers—nearly 94.2%. Despite the achievement, a significant number of students were unable to pass. Of them, 20,691 failed in one subject, 10,509 in two, 6,103 in three, 3,799 in four, 2,552 in five, and 1,716 in all subjects.

Bangarappa said no student should discontinue education due to exam setbacks. To ease the burden on families, govt will allow students to appear for the exam free of cost as was done last year, he added.

CET programme

Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) will hold CET seat-allotment discussion (manthana) to create awareness about option entry and counselling in engineering as well as in medical colleges.

The programme will be organised in the second week of May. To organise this year's programme more systematically over two days, a preparatory workshop on counselling has been scheduled in Bengaluru on May 9. TNN

DOCS WARN OF FOOD SPOILAGE AS summer heat boils over

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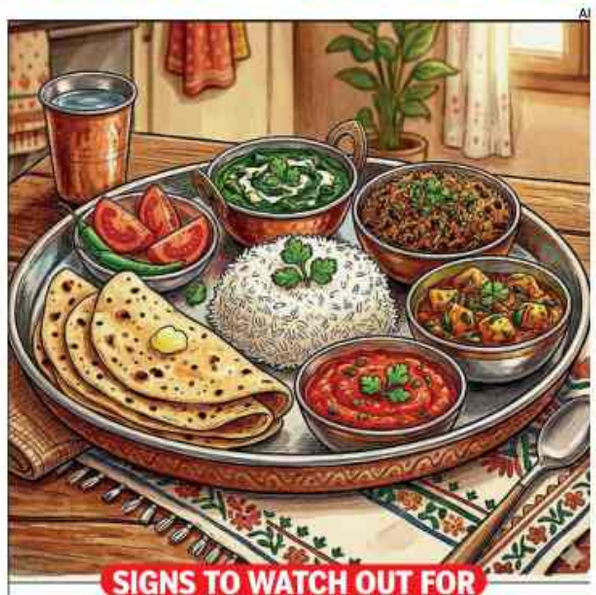
AI



SIGNS TO WATCH OUT FOR

Dairy: Sour or unusual smell, curdling or separation in milk, slimy texture (paneer), bitter or off taste

Cooked rice & grains (rice, roti, chapati): Slimy or sticky texture, foul or fermented smell, discolouration or white/green spots (mould)

Fruits & vegetables: Slimy surface, mushy or overly soft spots, fermented or alcoholic smell, visible mould or dark patches

Leafy greens (spinach, coriander): Wilting or yellowing, excess moisture or sliminess, black spots or foul smell

Bengaluru: The shocking news of a family of four dying of suspected food poisoning in Mumbai has made food safety a hot topic of discussion. In Bengaluru, where temperatures continue to climb, experts are urging people to prioritise hygienic preparation, storage and consumption to reduce the risk of spoilage and infection.

"Warm temperatures and humidity create ideal conditions for food spoilage. Unrefrigerated milk, curd and paneer can go bad within hours. Bacteria such as Salmonella and E coli multiply rapidly in cooked rice and leftovers," said Aditi Prasad Apte, clinical nutritionist at Aster RV Hospital. Certain foods are particularly vulnerable in heat. "Berries, bananas, and cut melons spoil quickly, while leafy vegetables wilt and rot faster. Meat, poultry and seafood require strict temperature control, and cream-filled bakery products can spoil almost immediately if not stored properly," Apte said.

Doctors said food contamination often comes with visible signs. "In dairy products, sour smell, curdling, or a slimy texture in paneer are red flags. Cooked rice or rotis should be discarded if they turn slimy, foul-smelling, or develop spots. Rice should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours. Similarly, fruits and vegetables with mushy patches, fermented smell or visible mould should be avoided," said Dr Adarsh CK, HoD, medical gastroenterology, hepatology and advanced endoscopy, at Gleneagles BGS Hospital, Kengeri.

With many turning to juices and tender coconut water for hydration, experts caution against poor hygiene in handling. "People don't need to avoid them but must be careful. Choose vendors who use clean equipment, fresh ingredients and safe water. Avoid juices left open, pre-cut fruits exposed to flies or unclean glasses. Sugarcane juice should be freshly prepared, and tender coconut is safest when cut fresh with clean tools," said Dr Nishmita R, consultant, internal medicine, at Sparsh Hospital, RR Nagar.

For storage, experts recommend keeping refrigerators at around 5°C and ensuring raw and cooked foods are stored separately in covered containers. Overcrowding should be avoided to allow proper air circulation, which is essential to keep food fresh.

"A simple guideline is the 'rule of 2-2-2' — do not leave cooked food outside for more than two hours, consume refrigerated food within two days and avoid reheating more than twice," Dr Adarsh said.

Photo for representation

WATCH WHAT YOU BUY: Food Safety and Standards Authority of India has cautioned against buying fruits with black blotches

Mangoes being tested for carbide residue: Officials

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Bengaluru: In tandem with Telangana's crackdown on chemically ripened mangoes, Karnataka authorities have also stepped up surveillance. Health department officials said mango samples from Kolar, the state's largest supply hub, are being tested for chemical residue. "Tests for chemical traces are also being conducted on fruits from other regions sold in Bengaluru markets," an official told **TOI**.

The move comes after enforcement teams in Hyderabad recently seized 200kg of artificially ripened mangoes. As part of wider surveillance, Karnataka's food safety teams have also tested 60 watermelon samples, including 22 in Bengaluru.

"They were found safe for colouring agents," officials said. "The food safety department is also collecting samples of concentrated fruit juices to check for adulteration."

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has cautioned against buying fruits with black blotches, which may indicate ripening using acetylene gas from calcium carbide. FSSAI also recommends washing fruit thoroughly with potable running water before consumption.

At the same time, supply concerns are emerging due to weather-related crop losses. Dr MN Thimmegowda, professor and head of agrometeorology, University of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK, said yields have plummeted. "While flowering was good in Nov, there was no rain in March. The rise in temperature coupled with low soil moisture caused flowers to drop," he said. "As trees conserve resources, fruits also drop when small and do not reach full growth."

Plain clothes, big business for traders ahead of NEET

▶ Continued from page 1 (Other Book)

TOI

NOD MUST FOR EXEMPTIONS

- Avoid heavy clothes, long sleeves not preferable
- Students in cultural/customary dress must report one hour before reporting time
- Prefer slippers, low-heel sandals
- Any deviation (on medical or other grounds) from dress code should have National Testing Agency approval before admit cards are issued

— Source: NTA

EXAM FIT: A model from the NEET collection of Sanju Fashions in Srikrishnapuram, Palakkad

My shop is amid several exam centres. Four years ago, on the day of the test, we had a lot of students running to us to make modifications in their clothes — snipping off sleeves, heavy embroidery work. That is when the idea stuck. We've been offering NEET-compliant clothes for three years now. This time, we went on social media with ads," said Seena Sharath of Sreekumar Textiles in Alappuzha, Kerala, who starts sales three weeks before the exam.

"We stitch plain kurtas and straight pants — neither as ballooning as palazzos nor as figure-hugging as leggings, just the right cut for NEET. These tops could be used later on too. This year, we have introduced coordinated sets as well," she added.

For Sanju Fashions in Srikrishnapuram, Palakkad, inspiration to offer NEET-ready dresses came from within. "A girl in our family was appearing for NEET. When we customised a dress for her, we realised there could be other candidates who need similar help," said Jayananth KV, one of the directors of the shop.

In Tamil Nadu, textile chain Majestic Maharaja has NEET collections in seven of its stores. "We gave specifications to the manufacturers and asked them to provide dresses that abide by NEET rules," said B Saravanan, store manager in Tanjavore. Shopkeepers say demand has surged in weeks leading up to the exam. Seena has sold close to 600 pieces in 10 days. Shibu EF, owner of Mummy and Me in Parassala, Thiruvananthapuram, said the sale will pick up two days prior to the exam. "That is when students will start doing last-minute preparations," he said.

No shade, no pause for city's frontline workers

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Bengaluru: As the scorching sun tightens its grip on the city, many residents seek refuge indoors. But for those at the bottom of the urban workforce, there is no escape. Delivery agents, Accredited Social Health Activists and waste collectors continue their daily routines under punishing heat, navigating long hours without access to drinking water, toilets or rest. Their labour sustains the city's rhythm even as extreme conditions expose the fragile realities of their working lives, where survival often takes precedence over safety.

GRIND IN HEATWAVE

On the sidelines of a workshop on 'Extreme heat and its impact on Bengaluru,' organised Tuesday by Karnataka Media Academy and Asar Social Impact Advisers, these workers shared their gruelling work conditions under the sweltering heat.

A day earlier, a 45-year-old MGNREGA worker died after collapsing in extreme heat amid temperatures above 41°C in Raichur district, prompting advisories on hydration, limited outdoor exposure, protective clothing and vigilance for heatstroke.

PTI

NO OTHER CHOICE: Bengaluru's extreme heat is exposing the harsh realities of frontline workers who endure long hours sans basic amenities, as highlighted in a workshop held Tuesday

K LINGARAJU | Delivery exec in Electronics City

A typical day at work begins at the collection point, but once I leave, there is no stopping. I cover 130km to 150km every day, racing through traffic and heat to deliver essentials on time. Every movement is tracked. If I take a pause, I risk penalties. So I keep going, through the glare, the heat rising from the asphalt, the sweat soaking into my clothes.

I carry a bottle of water on my bike, but finding a place to refill it is another challenge. Clean water is not easy to come by. Sometimes, a kind customer offers to fill it; that small gesture can feel like relief in the middle of a punishing day. There are no toilets, no proper breaks. If I need to eat or use a washroom, I switch to offline mode and grab 10-15 minutes, hoping it doesn't affect my ratings.

Even my phone, my lifeline for navigation, gives up in this heat. It overheats and shuts down, forcing me to wait in whatever shade I can find. We are not given jackets, sunscreen or even basic protection. By the end of the day, I'm burnt, dehydrated and exhausted. But the system does not slow down, so neither can I.

MANSOOR | Dry waste collection worker in Jayanagar

I start at 7 in the morning, when the air is still bearable. But by noon, the heat becomes suffocating. Wearing a mask and gloves under the blazing sun, I feel like I cannot breathe. I can't work for more than half an hour at a stretch without feeling dizzy, but work doesn't stop.

There is no access to drinking water while collecting waste, so I spend money to fill four or five bottles at RO plants. Many of us, especially women, avoid drinking water altogether because there are no toilets during the collection drive. During menstruation, it becomes even harder for women, something words cannot fully explain.

When we return to the segregation centre, we eat in the same cramped 40x25ft space where we work with loads of garbage. There is no toilet, no clean water, no proper ventilation. Most roofs are just sheets, trapping the heat inside. Fans are not provided, and the solar fans once given by NGOs no longer work. Our bodies bear the brunt of it all; constant sweating, exposure to garbage and heat leave us with allergies and skin infections. Still, we show up every day, because this is our livelihood.

FARHANA | ASHA worker at Rajajinagar

By the time I step out to begin my rounds, the sun is already overhead, pressing down on the narrow lanes of the slum I cover. I'm responsible for nearly 3,000 people, 500 to 600 households, and most days, that means climbing three or four floors in buildings that trap the heat like ovens. Most of the time, we cover 8-10km by walking under the sweltering heat, carrying a bag filled with supplies and record books in one hand and a weighing scale in the other; there's no space left to hold a water bottle. It is inadvisable to drink water outside, for fear of falling sick from unsafe water. Even if you drink water, often there is no access to restrooms. If I'm lucky, I find a paid one.

My uniform silk crepe sari, one of the two we receive for the entire year, clings to my skin, soaked in sweat, leaving me with itches and discomfort through the day. Summers bring more surveys, more work, more walking. Our salaries arrive only a few times a year, and even a tender coconut feels like a luxury. Hydration becomes a daily gamble. Sometimes I wonder how long my body can keep up with the expectations placed on it.

Drones crack down on gambling in S'mogga forest

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

In probably a first-of-its-kind operation aimed at curbing illegal activities in forests, Shivamogga district police launched a drone-assisted crackdown Tuesday.

Acting on persistent public complaints about illicit rackets operating in remote and inaccessible areas — particularly in Bhadravati taluk — SP B Nikhil directed the use of aerial surveillance. The operation led to the detection of a large group involved in illegal gambling near a canal in Kudligere forest range on the outskirts of Bhadravati.

As many as 19 people were apprehended and an FIR was registered at Bhadravati Rural police station.

The technology-driven move comes amid growing public frustration and allegations that illegal activities in Malnad region are thriving due to the area's difficult and dense terrain.

TOI

DEEP SCAN: The operation led to the detection of a group in the Kudligere forest range on the outskirts of Bhadravati

Residents have demanded similar aerial operations in areas such as Mallapura, Kalyala and Tattehalli.

In a separate incident, Hosanagara police are searching for the owner of a sand-laden truck who allegedly mocked police through a video posted on social media with cinematic background. The accused reportedly filmed his truck carrying sand and claimed it was being escorted by a police emergency response vehicle to Hosanagara police station.

SP B Nikhil said the man is absconding. He warned against attempts to ridicule or undermine police authority on social media and said such actions will be dealt with sternly.

Student dies by suicide; police harassment alleged

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

A college student allegedly hanged himself in his rented room, following alleged police harassment during a recent anti-drug drive.

The deceased has been identified as **Aditya Myageri**, a BSc student of Kittel College and a native of Belur village in Badami taluk of Bagalkot district.

According to his family, Aditya was subjected to harassment despite testing negative for ganja consumption.

On April 25, Aditya was among 10 students detained by Vidyagiri police during an anti-ganja consumption drive. He was later released after medical tests reportedly confirmed he had not consumed ganja.

However, it is alleged a lawyer intervened and promised to settle the matter, collecting money from the students. There are also allegations that some police personnel pressured the students to pay money. On Monday night, Aditya reportedly called his mother, requesting Rs 2,000. She was unable to arrange the cash immediately. Later that night, she learned her son had died by suicide.

His mother Kavita alleged Aditya was distressed by repeated police threats of being booked in the ganja case.

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I, Mr. Rajpara Dhruv Manishkumar S/o Rajpara Manishkumar, residing at No.705, Renaissance Temple Bells, Opp. Iskon Temple, WOC Road, Yeshwanthpura, Bengluru - 560022, do hereby solemnly declare that Dhruv Rajpara & Rajpara Dhruv Manishkumar both the names are one and the same. I further declare that I have changed my name from Dhruv Rajpara to Rajpara Dhruv Manishkumar vide Affidavit dated 21.04.2026, sworn before Notary B S Geetha, Bengaluru.

I, Avani Jhanwar, D/o Adesh Jhanwar, R/o B708, 7th Floor, Ambience Diva, Sarjapur Road, Bellandur, Bengaluru - 560103, Karnataka do hereby declare that I have changed my name from Avani Adesh Jhanwar to Avani Jhanwar and henceforth I shall be known as Avani Jhanwar in all purpose, vide affidavit no. IN-KA39698930506375Y sworn before the Notary Public at Bengaluru on 22 April 2026, Avani Jhanwar and Avani Adesh Jhanwar both are same and one identical person.

I, R Archana Shet, D/o R Ramesh Shet, residing at No. 744, 10th Cross, 16th Main Road, Srinivasa Nagar 2nd Phase, Banashankari, B'lore South, Bengaluru - 560050, I further declare that I have changed my son name from B N Samarth to Sudarshan Archana Shet vide Affidavit dated 23.04.2026, sworn before Notary S.N. Madhu, Bengaluru.

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I Hitherto known as JULIANA RITA DSOUZA W/o VALERIAN FRANCIS MONTEIRO residing at No.86/1 Chiguru, 1st main, B Channasandra Road, B Channasandra, Bangalore 560043 Permanent address: 91/94 Naveen cottage, 5th Cross, Oil mill road, Aravind nagar, St. Thomas Town Post, Bangalore 560084 have changed my name and hereafter be known as J RITA DSOUZA vide affidavit dated 25-April-2026 at Bangalore

I, Nariboina Prasanna Kumar, S/o Nariboina Surya Narayana, R/o 2/B, Marri Chettu Veedi, Kamayyapalem Gramam, Jeelugumilli Mandalam, Kamayyapalem PO, West Godavari, AP-534456, have changed my name to Nariboina Prashanth Kumar and shall hereafter be known as Nariboina Prashanth Kumar.

I, SMITHA IYER W/O Late K Muthuraman born on 10.01.1950 r/a B1-304 Shree Prakrithi Apts, Kodigehalli, Blr-97,have changed my name to SMITHA MUTHURAMAN vide affidavit dt 27.04.26 at Bangalore

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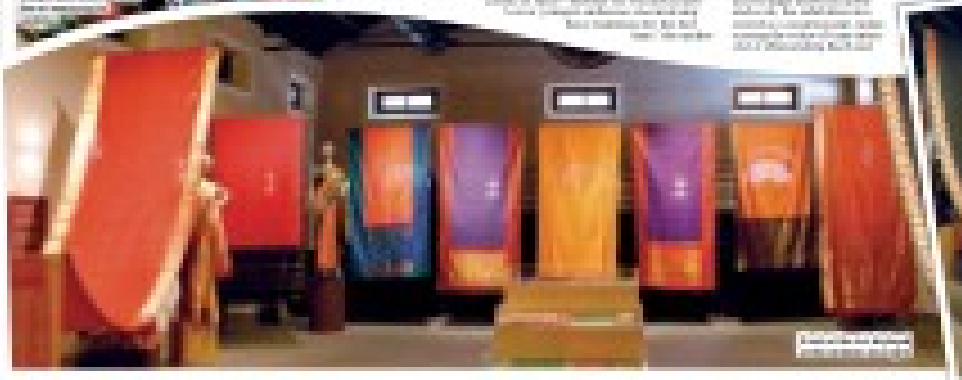

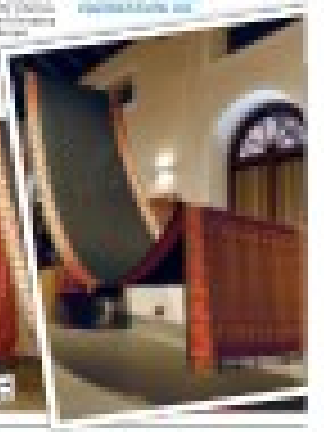

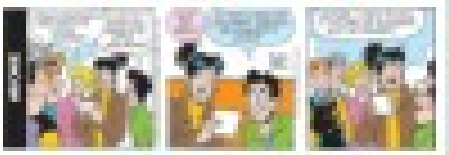

Relief for owners: Rera orders open floodgates for claims against BDA

Of 38 Plaints Filed, Rera Cleared 30

Vindhya.Pabolu
@timesofindia.com

File photo

Many seek compensation from BDA for the interest paid on loans and continued stay in rented houses

Many have waited nearly nine years, and a few have passed away without seeing their homes. While compensation orders have given people some confidence, payments are still uncertain, and BDA may challenge them. But it is clear that accountability must be enforced as people cannot continue to suffer because of prolonged delays and lack of infrastructure
Sridhar Nuggehalli
PRESIDENT, NPKL OPEN FORUM

Bengaluru: Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) faces the prospect of being hit with more compensation claims after a few Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL) allottees successfully fought their case before the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (Rera) and got favourable orders.

As of April, site owners have filed 38 complaints against BDA, and the real estate regulator has disposed of around 30. The majority were related to claims of compensation for the delay on BDA's part in providing basic amenities, including road, water, drainage, and electricity connections.

The vast housing project, located between Mysuru Road and Magadi Road in Yeshwantpur assembly constituency, has about 29,000 plots. The nine-year delay in project completion has left more than 10,000 primary allottees and others who bought plots in auctions in a tight spot. NPKL tops Rera's list of projects that have defaulted. The list mentions Dec 31, 2021 as the date on which it was supposed to have been completed.

Rera and the appellate tribunals have ruled that BDA is a promoter, ignoring its claims to the contrary, giving a breather to thousands of allottees. Many are now making a beeline to the regulator with complaints in hand and seeking to claim compensation from BDA for the interest paid on loans for the extra years, for their continued stay in rented homes, and for having to pay a higher rate of interest after banks downgraded their home loans to site loans and levied a commercial rate of interest with retrospective effect. Banks require home loan borrowers to build houses in two years, failing which they are downgraded to commercial loans.

BDA to challenge orders

The civic authority, officials said, is planning to challenge the Rera orders in appellate courts. But as per the mandatory pre-deposit requirements in the Rera Act, a promoter must deposit 30% of the penalty imposed if it wants to challenge the Rera award.

Meanwhile, allottees see a ray of light in the Rera orders. Many **TOI** spoke to said they waited for about two decades before they got this site and that several have also become ineligible to get home loans from banks.

Sairam, an NPKL Open Forum member who got his plot registered in 2020, said: "When BDA failed to deliver ready-to-build sites is when I felt someone had to bell the wild cat; so I filed complaints. I paid about Rs 97 lakh plus registration in Feb 2020. My main grouse was that despite full payment and possession, essential infrastructure like roads, water, sewerage and electricity was missing. When I finally won against BDA in Rera, I really felt relieved."

Another allottee, 56, from Block 5 said: "After learning that we could approach Rera, I filed a complaint. Now I've got a compensation order for Rs 47 lakh. Despite investing our life savings and paying loans, I'm unable to build a home. While the judgment gives us some relief, we are prepared for further legal steps depending on BDA's response, as ultimately we want both our rightful compensation and a liveable site where we can build homes."

Madhusudhan, an allottee at NPKL Block 3, said: "My mother wasn't aware of the process, so I had to run around for registration. She paid Rs 6 lakh under EWS (Economically Weaker Section), yet I've spent nearly five years following up. This is my mother's life savings."

'Clear disregard for law'

Sridhar Nuggehalli, president of NPKL Open Forum, said: "BDA has offered no proper response on compensation, reflecting a clear disregard for the law. Encouraged by rulings awarding 50-60% of site value as compensation, more allottees are now approaching Rera. While buyers still want to retain their sites and build homes, the absence of basic infrastructure continues to make construction unviable."

The allottees said BDA has not responded about payment of compensation yet.

Techie's decomposed body found; cops unsure of cause

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Police investigating the case of a 34-year-old software engineer, identified as **Puja Dutta**, whose naked and decomposed body was found in her rented house in Adugodi Monday night, suspect that she killed herself. At the same time, they are probing the case from all possible angles.

Puja, originally from Dhanbad, Jharkhand, was living alone on the third floor of a residential building for the last three years.

The incident came to light after her housemates alerted the owner, Janakamma, about a foul smell emanating from Puja's house.

Police summoned a locksmith to break open the door. They found her naked body in a decomposed state, indicating that she may have died at least five days ago.

The incident has raised questions if it was a case of suicide or death caused by other reasons as the body was found in a pool of blood. Torn papers were scattered in the room, and a table fan was turned on next to her body. The house walls were full of sticky notes and posters that had only one word, like meditation and confidence.

Puja's body was shifted to the mortuary and the exact cause of death will be known after the autopsy report. A senior police officer said, "Puja's phone was switched off. On Tuesday, we accessed her phone and contacted her parents. More details about her will be known only after their arrival in city late at night."

"The door was locked from inside. She had also latched three bolts. There were cut marks on her body," said the police officer.

Janakamma alleged a man frequently visited Puja and that the two often had heated arguments. She said Puja had a big speaker at her house and played loud music and sang, disturbing others. "I would scold her for playing loud music and asked her to vacate the house. She argued with me. I saw her last on Thursday (last week)," Janakamma added.

Janakamma couldn't provide details of the visitor and claimed he used to visit her a year back. Cops are checking Puja's call detail records.

Cong functionary held for molestation

Bengaluru: Anand P Naidu, a district Congress committee member, was arrested on charges of molesting a 16-year-old girl at her house in west Bengaluru.

Booked under Pocso Act, Naidu was remanded in judicial custody. Based on the complaint filed by the girl's father, a 40-year-old businessman, police arrested Naidu, a Congress functionary from Mahalakshmi Layout constituency.

The businessman also filed a complaint against his estranged second wife, accusing her of having a relationship with Anand. Police said the businessman is divorced from the girl's mother, who was his first wife.

"According to the businessman, his second wife had affairs with many men, including Anand. However, his 16-year-old daughter and two other children lived with her. Anand would beat the children. Recently, he molested the 16-year-old girl and she narrated the incident to her father," a cop said. TNN

50 women jump to safety as godown fire spreads to PG

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TOI

ENGULFED: Fire spread from the godown to adjacent buildings in Nandini Layout

Bengaluru: A major tragedy was narrowly averted in Nandini Layout, west Bengaluru, when around 50 young women escaped a raging fire by jumping from their PG accommodation building to safety.

The fire broke out in Blue Leaf Signages godown in Annamma Circle, opposite Kanteerava Studio, around 12.20am Sunday.

LED boards and materials stored in the godown were gutted. The flames quickly started spreading to adjacent buildings, including a four-storey building that housed a ladies' paying guest accommodation, where nearly 50 women were staying.

Within minutes, the smoke engulfed the PG accommodation. With no time to wait and the exit blocked, the women climbed over the compound wall and jumped from the building to escape the flames. Fortunately, all of them survived, with only minor injuries reported due to jumping.

The fire damaged a couple of vehicles parked on the roadside before fire and emergency services doused the flames in about four hours.

The adjacent buildings' windows shattered and walls cracked in the incident. Nandini Layout police have taken up a fire accident case and are investigating.

No proposal to delay civic polls, says SEC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Karnataka State Election Commission (SEC) said it has not sought any extension or postponement of elections to five city corporations under Greater Bengaluru Authority despite a request from state govt to defer the timeline.

As per a Supreme Court directive, the election process must be completed by June 30. SEC said it has already completed key preparatory steps.

"As per the commission's directions, final electoral rolls for 369 wards have been published on April 18," SEC said in its statement.

The SEC release said state govt, through the chief secretary, urged the commission to extend the deadline to Sept 30, citing census work between April 16 and May 15, special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls by Election Commission and deployment of staff for examination duty.

SEC said it placed govt's request before Supreme Court, but made it clear in its affidavit that it has not independently sought more time or any postponement of polls.

Motor mechanic, bizman to pay fine for kids' joyrides

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: A day after videos showing separate incidents of two pre-teens riding gearless scooters in and around Magadi Road went viral on social media,

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traffic police Tuesday booked the owner of one of the vehicles and the father of the other minor.

First, police booked Afzar Pasha, an electric motor mechanic in JJ Nagar, for handing over his gearless scooter to his minor son, who rode with five more minors as pillion on Padarayanapura Main Road near Goripalya. The photo showing the six children astride on the scooter went viral, drawing criticism and concern from netizens.

"Pasha visited his sister's residence in KP Agrahara. While elders were busy, Pasha's 11-year-old son took the two-wheeler's keys and came out. Taking his cousins and children from neighbouring houses, he went on a ride," police said.

Police also booked a businessman, Palani, from Nandini Layout. "Palani took the boy's father, a carpenter, to his shop for some work. When Palani was busy with the boy's father, the 12-year-old took the keys and enjoyed a ride," police said. Since cops seized both the scooters, Palani and Pasha will have to appear before court and pay fines (at least Rs 20,000 each) to get back their vehicles.

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Devendra with Ijayraj

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'People think celebrity moms are spa-moms, but we are no different'

*From MTV VJ to Bollywood actor to stay-at-home mom and then an entrepreneur, **Amrita Arora Ladak** has had an exciting and fulfilling journey. She recently opened a restaurant in Goa and lives on both sides of the glare: paparazzi culture, trolls weighing in on her choices, and the reality of raising two teenagers in today's competitive world. In a conversation with **Sidhi Kapoor**, Arora divulges the truth about celebrity mom-life and shares some precious life lessons for her sons*

How would you introduce yourself today: actor, mom, entrepreneur, or all three?
Well, I don't really like labelling myself. It's funny to say, "I am a mom or an entrepreneur." That's like being put in a box. I feel I'm a little bit of everything, but if I've to give myself a label, it would be 'mom'.

What does a typical day in Amrita Arora's life look like now versus 10 years ago?
My day starts by waking up with my children and sending them off to school. Of course, they are grown-up big boys now, but I still see them off. Then, I hit the gym. After that, I take a couple of meetings related to my restaurant. In the evenings, I like going out with my husband (businessman Shakeel Ladak). So, it's pretty much a simple life. I like it that way.

You became a mom to Azaan in 2010 and Rayaan in 2012. What was the biggest surprise about motherhood that no one warned you about?
Every year is different and you look back at things and wish you did certain things differently. When I had a question, I used to ask my mom and Malla (Mallaika) and they both would be like: "Oh, we have forgotten." So, it is pretty much your own journey with your children and husband. Organically, through mistakes and things that have not panned out the way I thought, motherhood is like a wake-up call. It's an emotional journey but very fulfilling. I cannot think of my life in any other way, and my two children are the most important beings in my life.

> When I had a question, I used to ask my mom and Malla (Mallaika) and they both would be like: "Oh, we have forgotten." So, it is pretty much your own journey with your children and husband. You learn from your mistakes

Did you parent differently the second time around? What did you unlearn or relearn?
I keep apologising to Azaan a lot. I tell him: "I learnt from you and the mistakes I made!" When Rayaan came, things were a lot easier. I was a pro the second time around. With my first child, every moment was overwhelming. I would panic if he had a fever or sometimes when I thought I was not feeding him enough, and things like that. The second time around, things were easier as I had more experience. Of course, I had moments with the younger one as well, but it was still easier.

Have you faced teen drama?
Azaan is 16 and Ray is 13. I did have my moments of teen issues, but they both are genuinely good kids. Little hiccups will always be there but then parenting is a little bit of friendship too, so as parents you need to balance the situation as you go along.

How do you handle paparazzi culture and constant public attention around your kids? Any rules you've set as a family?
When there are paparazzi, they run! I tell them to stand for one picture, but they find it cringe (laughs). Then, of course, there are certain things we are particular about since they are at an impressionable age. As teens, they want to go out but then there's an age limit. We tell them not to get carried away since there is exposure to a lot of things.

Sometimes, you have to take things with a pinch of salt. I believe your kids should be transparent with you; they should not hide anything. They look at me more like a friend, so thankfully both children confide in me and Shakeel all the time.

Azaan Ladak

Rayaan

How do you keep your sons grounded despite the glamour around them?
I think I'm pretty far removed from Bollywood now. But my sons have a little concept of it now because their aunt is very famous. Sometimes, when they are out, they get clicked, but I think it's not brought home. It's not a major conversation. It doesn't affect them…it's no big deal. Right now, the only excitement kids have is going out and partying with their friends. So Azaan gets to go out a bit. I know all his friends. It's very important to know if they are in a safe environment and whether he's hanging out with the right crowd. This makes a huge difference.

After becoming a mom, how did your relationship with work change? Was stepping back a choice or did it just happen?
Earlier, I didn't do anything. I gave my complete time to my children when they were smaller. It was during the pandemic that I considered opening a restaurant in Goa. Sometimes, my mum took care of them at home. At other times, my kids would join me for work trips. The shift automatically happened. Kids need to see their mother working. I try to strike a balance between being a stay-at-home mom and a working mother. The grounding was very real.

They used to have me in their face 24x7. At some point, I felt I needed to distance myself a bit and let my kids see me working. I was a helicopter mom, and then the kids were tired of seeing me all the time (laughs). Now they are super proud of me and the restaurant. They take pride in talking about it. They are learning that dreams do come true and hard work pays off. Even for Mallaika and me, our mom was always a working mom. She's done it forever. So, the work ethic is ingrained in us since childhood. Our children also know that. Children growing up need that inspiration.

Do you have a good support system to help you strike a balance?
Shakeel, my husband, has always held my hand. I will give him full credit. Anything I want to do, he supports me and encourages me throughout. He is the backbone of our family. Touch wood!

Social media shows a lot of 'perfect mom' content. What's the reality of celebrity motherhood that people don't see?
People don't see the normalcy of celebrity life. People think celebrity moms are "spa moms." The impression is such. At the end of the day, we are no different from anybody. When people see us in our natural habitat, they say, "You are so normal." Obviously, we are not abnormal! It's the work that gets you fame and scrutiny. Like my parlour girl should be my hero. She comes from so far away, and works all day. People are all the same and very normal and so are celebrities.

> New moms just need to give themselves a pat on the back. As a new mom, you are always overthinking. You don't give yourself too much credit for giving birth and looking after the human you carried for nine months

Trolls and unsolicited advice come free with Instagram. Have you ever faced judgment about your parenting online?
Hundreds of times! Like I had put on weight in the past so people have been pretty brutal while commenting on social media. Sometimes, I do look at comments, and it irritates and hurts. You feel bad for a day or so. Shakeel keeps telling me to not read, but when you're scrolling, you do tend to read a few comments. These trolls have no work. They will comment on everyone, but it hurts.

What advice would you give to new moms in showbiz or otherwise?
New moms just need to give themselves a pat on the back. They should know they are doing a great job. As a new mom, you are always overthinking. You don't give yourself too much credit for giving birth and looking after the human you carried for nine months. Every mom should know they are doing their best. Do not get influenced by others. Don't look at someone else's journey and think why is mine not the same. Don't look at anyone for validation. Do everything to the best of your abilities.

One life lesson for your children...
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AI SUPPORT OR SUBSTITUTE?

How parents can guide children to use AI as support, not dependency

The sight of your teenager opening ChatGPT instead of their textbook can spark mixed feelings. Artificial intelligence offers unprecedented support for learning, yet the fine line between wise guidance and unhealthy reliance is where parents must step in

The Fine Balance of AI

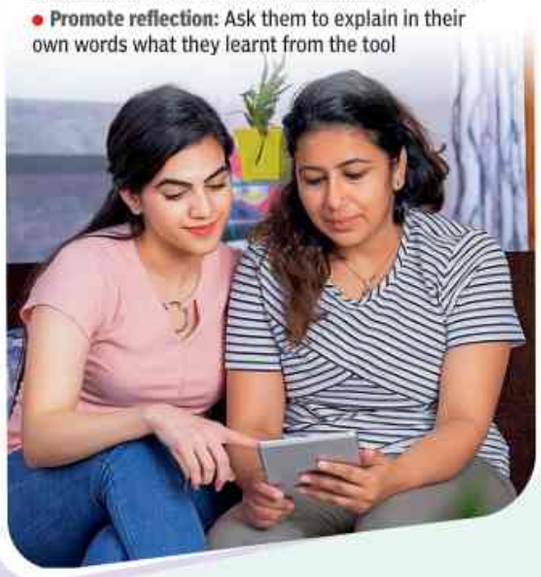
AI tools can enhance education by clarifying complex concepts, suggesting examples, and even providing structured outlines. Used well, they nurture curiosity and strengthen understanding. The risk lies when students allow these tools to think for them rather than with them. Parents today face the challenge of ensuring balance—supporting exploration while discouraging complacency

Talk Before You Restrict

A constructive approach involves open dialogue. Instead of banning AI, ask your child how they have used it for an assignment. Did it help them grasp a theory, or merely provide a ready-made solution? These conversations signal that you value effort more than shortcuts

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

- **Set purpose before use:** Encourage children to attempt a task first, then turn to AI for support
- **Cross-check information:** Teach them to verify responses through textbooks or trusted sources
- **Limit dependency:** Suggest using AI for brainstorming or explanations, not for copying final answers
- **Promote reflection:** Ask them to explain in their own words what they learnt from the tool



Model the Right Example

Equally important is modelling balance. Parents who show thoughtful engagement with technology set the strongest example. Whether using AI at work or checking reliable sources online, demonstrating discernment leaves a lasting impression

Building Habits That Last

Schools, too, are increasingly integrating AI into learning. Aligning home guidance with school practices ensures consistency. When children see AI as an aid, not a replacement for effort, they develop resilience and responsibility

TIP OF THE DAY

Homework is not just about correct answers but also about building habits of discipline, patience, and critical thinking. ChatGPT can be a helpful companion, but parents hold the key to ensuring it remains exactly that—a companion, not a crutch

Not just Patralekhaa. Body shaming is an everyday reality for new moms

From tips on cutting belly fat to the pressure to bounce back, the remarks often take a toll. Experts say it can lead to emotional scars, unrealistic expectations of their own bodies

Neha Bhayana

A stream of paparazzi photos and videos of the Bollywood couple Patralekhaa and Rajkummar Rao flooded social media last week. The couple were out promoting their latest film, but the conversation veered towards something else entirely—Patralekhaa's figure. The new mother, who gave birth to a baby girl six months ago, was brutally trolled for her weight gain, as most videos used the caption "What happened to her???" Retorting back, Patralekhaa posted a story online saying, "What happened to me is that I have just given birth! I have not sat and eaten a mountain. I just delivered a baby and produced two films simultaneously, which is not an easy job..."

The actor's words echoed a pain that most moms can relate to, a reminder that despite the push against body shaming, trolls continue to exist both online and offline. While celebrities always face more scrutiny, even ordinary moms are regularly subjected to criticism on this front. In fact, the pressure to "bounce back" has become even more pronounced as some actors and influencers show off svelte figures just weeks after giving birth, winning applause and tags like 'yummy mummy' and 'hot mom'. "Every woman's body reacts differently to childbirth. Some can get back in shape in six weeks, others may take years. It is unfortunate that people still comment on it," says Sucheta Pal, a maternal fitness educator.

These remarks can often lead to hurt that lasts for years, as was the case with Sunitha Desai. Three months after giving birth, the excitement of meeting a childhood friend was quickly replaced by a sinking feeling. The friend greeted her by pointing out how "huge" she had become. "I felt very hurt. How can one be so judgmental? Even if one thinks like that, one need not blurt it out. It is not funny," she says. For Desai, who had gone through procedures like IVF to conceive and deliver a healthy baby, the comments made things worse at a vulnerable time. Her daughter is eight now, but she still feels angry when she thinks about that day. She admits she is still overweight, but is content. "I had done a lot of strict dieting in my school and college days because of my family's pressure to be thin. I lost weight, but also my immunity. I used to fall sick a lot. I feel healthier now."

Desai's story is emblematic of a larger culture of scrutiny that new moms often go through. Delhi-based psychologist Upasana Chaddha Vij says women often share the comments they face soon after giving birth. "From how swollen their nose is to how their skin has become darker and how their belly still looks big, women hear all kinds of remarks. They are advised to tie a belt or drink jeera water to lose belly fat," she says. "There is so much focus on appearance and no appreciation for the body that has created a life."

> As a society, we need to move to a more compassionate and better understanding of postpartum bodies. Shifting the narrative from 'how quickly did you lose weight?' to 'how are you feeling now?' will make a meaningful difference
>
> **Upasana Chaddha Vij,** COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST

While it's easier to ignore online trolls, dealing with such comments is often harder at home. At a time when Ahmedabad mom Rina Mehta (name changed) was going through postpartum depression after her second child's delivery, remarks from her husband hurt. "When we would go out, he'd point at other moms and tell me, 'See, they have become fit, you are still fat.' This used to pinch me a lot," she recalls, adding that she enrolled in yoga and zumba due to the pressure.

However, shedding a few kilos hardly helps, and there often seems to be no escape from the prying eyes. Mumbai mom Minal Patel admits to having experienced both skinny-shaming and fat-shaming. At the time of her marriage, her family often taunted her for being too lean. After the birth of her baby, she weighed 80 kgs, inviting callous remarks about weight gain instead. "I realised that women of any shape and size will be commented on. We just had to stop paying heed to idle people," she adds.

Vij says body-shaming has a deep impact on women in the postpartum phase as they are already burdened by hormonal changes, a shift in identity and sleep deprivation. "It worsens the anxiety, guilt and feeling of inadequacy that a new mom is already dealing with," she says, adding that the new moms should set gentle but firm boundaries. "As a society, we need to move to a more compassionate and better understanding of postpartum bodies. Shifting the narrative from 'how quickly did you lose weight?' to 'how are you feeling now?' will make a meaningful difference," she adds.

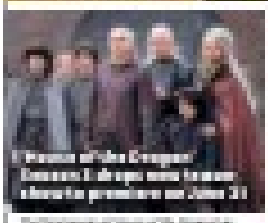
Mental and physical health experts say the biggest problem is that it is not just society, but also women who have unrealistic expectations of themselves when it comes to body weight. "Can you expect to have the same body at 60 as you had at 16? Then why do we expect to have the same body after the baby as we did before the baby?" asks Pal, who founded a programme called Mom.Bod.Strong to help women get stronger, not slimmer. Pal's own journey led to her pivot from the mainstream fitness industry to specialise in maternal fitness. "I was a wellness expert, so I assumed I would easily get back in shape. But I was in for a rude shock. I gained a lot of weight, and one day, when I was on stage teaching a live class, two months after my delivery, I peed in my pants. That day changed my thinking."

Currently on a multi-city tour to educate women about postpartum fitness, Pal says no woman can get back her pre-baby body because it changes during the process. "Everyone who trolled Patralekhaa should go and touch their own mother's feet. During pregnancy, a woman's abdominal muscles stretch up to 115 %. Her pelvic floor stretches 2.5 to 3.5 times, and her body can age by 4-5 years. But all we are worried about is weight loss. The goal should not be to have a flat belly, but to heal the body and lead a quality life that is ache- and pain-free."

Desai wishes women would uplift each other so they are not affected by those who pull them down. "When a neighbour delivered a baby, I sent her home-cooked meals for a few days. She was so touched," she says. "As moms, we already go through hell by shaming ourselves. We don't need extra help from others."

PAP ROW: Actor Patralekhaa recently hit back at trolls and the paparazzi for fat-shaming her

UP TO DATE | WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY



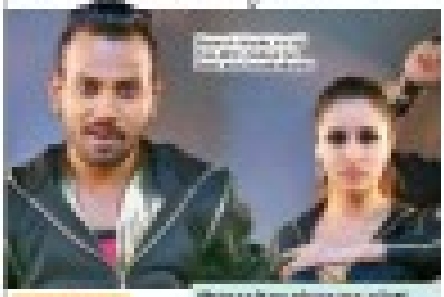
'House of the Dragon' Season 2 drops new teaser, sheds to premiere on June 31

King Charles and Queen Camilla arrive in US for visit

Friends' writers were mostly men who were mean, brutal: Lisa Kudrow

CBI Council tenders Jimmy Fallon Rhapsody in Blue claim

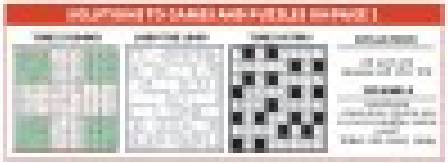
'In early 2000s, dance was not really a career'



'Dance has given me wings'

FINOLEX PIPES

SOLUTIONS TO GAMES AND PUZZLES ON PAGE 2



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High command call on cabinet rejig may define Siddaramaiah's future

ManuAiyappa.Kanathanda
@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: A long-pending cabinet rejig has emerged as the latest flashpoint in the tussle for the top post between Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar, with Congress high command's decision after the May 4 election results expected to shape the incumbent CM's political future.

Sources say, after the results, Siddaramaiah is likely to seek approval from party central brass for a cabinet rejig, with a visit to New Delhi likely in early May. What was initially seen as an administrative exercise is now being viewed as a key political signal on whether the party wants continuity or a CM switch.

"If the rejig is approved, it is expected to strengthen Siddaramaiah's position and will indicate party brass want him to complete his term, effectively shutting down Shivakumar's push for the top post," said a senior Congress functionary. "However, a delay or rejection could signal that the high command is keeping its options open, with Shivakumar or a Dalit functionary emerging as possible contenders."

Another Congress functionary privy to discussions in both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar camps, said: "Approval for a cabinet reshuffle would send the message that the current CM has the confidence of the high command."

Aware that the post-poll period could be crucial, Shivakumar has stepped up his outreach in Delhi, meeting senior Congress functionaries including Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal and Randeep Surjewala last week. Sources say he reiterated his claim for the CM post but was asked to wait for Rahul Gandhi's response.

Meanwhile, Siddaramaiah's confidants say he will abide by Rahul's decision. "He (Siddaramaiah) is a Rahul loyalist. He became CM twice because of Rahul despite being an outsider. He will not disregard Rahul's word," an MLA close to Siddaramaiah said.

At the organisational level too, parallel calculations are underway. Public works minister Satish Jarkiholi, also regarded as a CM confidant, at a meeting with Kharge and Surjewala, is learnt to have expressed willingness to take over as KPCC president from Shivakumar, who has completed six years in the post.

Sources say both camps are now pushing their agendas simultaneously, but functionaries point to another practical constraint. A delay beyond mid-May could push a decision further as Karnataka is likely to enter election mode.

The terms of four Rajya Sabha members, including opposition leader Mallikarjun Kharge, end on June 25, and the state biennial election notification is expected in early June. A Congress functionary said the polls are politically significant and the party is well placed to win three seats. "If this happens, it will be a victory for Siddaramaiah," they say. Elections to seven legislative council seats will also fall due.

Analysts believe the high command may decide to replace Siddaramaiah with a Dalit face to help consolidate votes ahead of the 2028 assembly polls, when anti-incumbency is expected to peak. "Kharge or home minister G Parameshwara could be considered. Kharge may be a better choice because Shivakumar will not oppose him, while Siddaramaiah can be accommodated as AICC chief," political analyst MN Patil said.

IF RAHUL SAYS, THEN CM WILL STEP DOWN: RAJANNA

Bengaluru: Congress MLA and former minister KN Rajanna Tuesday said Siddaramaiah is willing to step down as chief minister but only if directed by Rahul Gandhi. Ministers Satish Jarkiholi and HC Mahadevappa, both considered close to Siddaramaiah, met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and AICC general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeep Surjewala in New Delhi Monday and sought clarity on the issue.

Rajanna, a Siddaramaiah confidant, said, "The CM has an open mind on the issue. He has asked everyone to cooperate, and ministers have agreed." The remarks come amid mounting pressure from deputy CM DK Shivakumar for the top post, with speculation of a possible change of guard by mid-May.

Rajanna urged clarity, warning that prolonged uncertainty could hurt both governance and party. He reiterated the demand for a Dalit chief minister if there is a change. "Power is not permanent for any politician. Those who lose it will try to regain it, and those in power will try to retain it. The CM is ready to sacrifice or continue in office as per Rahul's directions," the former minister said.

Rajanna also hinted at organisational changes. "If ministers are to be changed, why shouldn't the party president?" he asked, referring to Shivakumar, who has completed six years as state Congress chief.

Food and civil supplies minister KH Muniyappa, another Siddaramaiah confidant, said a decision could be taken by the end of May. "Either way, a clear decision must be taken," he said.

TOI

FIRING AWAY: Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar at the inauguration of 'Kamadhenu Lok', a cow shelter at Lok Bhavan on Tuesday

> The govt is in its third year, and many expect a cabinet rejig. Other deserving MLAs must have a chance to become ministers and serve the people. But the party high command and CM Siddaramaiah have to decide, and we will abide by whatever decision they take. Everyone should show maturity till then
>
> **Dinesh Gundu Rao**
> HEALTH MINISTER

₹1.7 crore gap in CPA meet spend raises questions

Sandeep.Moudgal
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Bengaluru: An RTI reply has pointed to a Rs 1.7 crore difference in expenditure figures for the 11th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference hosted by the Karnataka legislature in Sept last year, with some details not reflected in official budget documents.

Participants included Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajya Sabha deputy chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh, presiding officers from various state legislatures and foreign representatives from Commonwealth countries.

Supplementary budgets for 2025-26 show the state allocated Rs 13.6 crore for the two-day event, but expenditure records available account for only Rs 11.9 crore spent on delegates' stay, hospitality and gifts. When contacted, secretariat officials said: "A few things may have been left out. We are checking what it is."

Each delegate was presented with an iPad, a gold- and silver-plated Ganda Berunda insignia, a Mysuru silk saree, an HMT watch and a leather trolley bag.

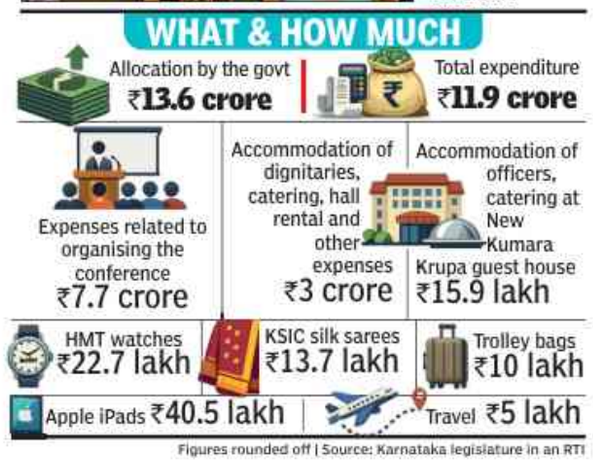
Speaker UT Khader said: "We may have spent Rs 40.5 lakh on iPads, but our state products like Mysuru silk sarees, HMT watches and Lidkar leather bags are worth Rs 400 crore. These are quality products and have now gone to other states in the country as well as abroad with foreign delegates. Our intent was to ensure an unforgettable event for delegates and keep the state's prestige in high esteem."

In reply to an RTI filed by Navin Kumar of Bengaluru-based Committee for Public Accountability, officials said 75 delegates received gift packages worth Rs 93,000 each. The items were bought and distributed by an event management firm, Laughing Water Production. The iPads accounted for the highest expenditure at Rs 40.5 lakh, followed by HMT watches at Rs 22.7 lakh. Silk sarees purchased from KSIC cost Rs 13.7 lakh, while trolley bags sourced from Lidkar amounted to Rs 10 lakh.

For accommodation, nearly Rs 1.3 crore spent at Taj West End, Rs 15.3 lakh at Radisson Blu and Rs 13.1 lakh at Lalit Ashok. An additional Rs 3.5 lakh was incurred for housing officials at Kumara Krupa Guest House.

File photo

SPEAKERS ALL: Om Birla, Basavaraj Horatti and UT Khader at the valedictory of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference


WHAT & HOW MUCH
Allocation by the govt
₹13.6 crore
Total expenditure
₹11.9 crore
Expenses related to organising the conference
₹7.7 crore
Accommodation of dignitaries, catering, hall rental and other expenses
₹3 crore
Accommodation of officers, catering at New Kumara Krupa guest house
₹15.9 lakh
HMT watches ₹22.7 lakh
KSIC silk sarees ₹13.7 lakh
Trolley bags ₹10 lakh
Apple iPads ₹40.5 lakh
Travel ₹5 lakh

Figures rounded off | Source: Karnataka legislature in an RTI

Vinay Kulkarni files appeal in high court

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The high court Tuesday ordered notice to CBI in response to an appeal filed by Congress legislator **Vinay Kulkarni** and co-accused Chandrashekar Indi, who have challenged a special court's recent verdict sentencing them to life imprisonment for the murder of BJP zilla panchayat member Yogesh Goudar in 2016.

When the appeals came up before a division bench of Justice Mohammed Nawaz and Justice Venkatesh Naik T, senior advocate CV Nagesh, appearing for the MLA and former minister, pressed for listing of the matter on April 30 to enable him to argue for interim relief. But the division bench pointed out that the matter cannot be heard on merits now and ruled that the appellant can approach the vacation bench in case of urgency. Meanwhile, the CBI counsel said the special court's verdict runs into 680 pages, and they should be granted time to go through it and file objections.

Kulkarni and 16 others were convicted on April 15 and life sentence was imposed. Chennakeshava Tingarikar, the one-time investigation officer and accused No 19 in the case, was sentenced to seven years imprisonment. The special court also ordered compensation of Rs 16 lakh to the children of the deceased BJP functionary.

SHORT TAKES

Govt notifies internal SC reservation split

The govt issued an order formalising internal reservation within the Scheduled Castes (SC) quota, while maintaining the overall 50% ceiling on reservations in line with an interim high court directive. In its order, the govt said the existing 15% SC reservation will continue, but will now be internally distributed as 5.25% for Category A, 5.25% for Category B, and 4.5% for Category C. Within Category C, 20% of seats in admissions will be set aside for 59 of the "most backward" castes. If eligible candidates from these groups are unavailable, the seats will revert to the broader Category C pool. The order reiterated that the 50% cap on total reservations will remain in force until further judicial direction. Officials have been instructed to expedite direct recruitment to 56,432 posts already cleared by the finance department.

Chethan Shivakumar

Khalid event: BJP protesters packed off

Bengaluru city police took scores of BJP members and right-wing activists into preventive custody after they staged a 'silent protest' against panel discussions and reading of excerpts from the book 'Umar Khalid and His World' on Tuesday. The programme was organised by People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and others. Protesters were transported in three BMTC buses from the venue before being left off. On Monday, BJP had urged Bengaluru police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh to cancel the programme. However, it went ahead with a massive police deployment.

KSDL records ₹507cr profit

Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Ltd (KSDL) has recorded a turnover of Rs 2,016 crore and a profit of Rs 507 crore in 2025-26, the first time the govt-run firm has crossed the Rs 2,000 crore mark, industries minister MB Patil said. Calling it a "historic" milestone, Patil said the firm has doubled its turnover in just four years after taking 105 years to reach the first milestone. From Rs 1,375 crore in 2022-23, KSDL's turnover rose by Rs 641 crore in three years, while its product range expanded from 34 to 94 with 57 new launches. Despite a capacity of 26,000 tonnes, production reached 47,494 tonnes through operational efficiency. Of the Rs 507 crore profit, Rs 157 crore will be paid as dividend and Rs 5 crore to the CM's relief fund.

Sudhakar's family slams HDK

The family of D Sudhakar, planning and statistics minister, lambasted Union minister HD Kumaraswamy for political remarks while the minister remains hospitalised. Kumaraswamy had claimed Sudhakar had "hid" his condition from people of the state and that his "thumb impression was being used on official documents". In a statement, the family called the remarks "inappropriate" and urged restraint. Sudhakar is on ventilator support following a severe lung infection. Doctors and his family are hopeful that he will recover.

Congress suspends 3 in Bagalkot

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bagalkot: After acting against functionaries who allegedly worked against its candidate in the bypoll to Davanagere South, Congress has now suspended three members in Bagalkot for alleged anti-party activity.

Based on recommendations of SN Rampur, president, Bagalkot Rural Congress unit, SG Nanjayyanamath, district Congress president, suspended BDCC Bank vice-chairman Murugesh Kadlimatti, Kamatagi town panchayat member Ramesh Jamkhandi and Guruling Patil.

Nanjayyanamath had previously issued a show-cause notice. "Since they did not respond, they stand suspended," his order stated.

Congress had suspended K Abdul Jabbar, MLC, from primary membership of the party, and removed MLC Naseer Ahmed as political secretary to the CM for alleged anti-party activity in the Davanagere South bypoll.

M'luru cooker blast: BJP accuses Congress of appeasement

BJP stepped up ridicule of governing Congress over the Mangaluru cooker blast case after a special court Monday sentenced the prime accused to 10 years rigorous imprisonment. Accusing Congress of indulging in "appeasement politics", opposition leader R Ashoka targeted deputy CM DK Shivakumar and other Congress functionaries, alleging that they had earlier downplayed the incident for political reasons. BJP re-posted an old video of Shivakumar on 'X', where he is purportedly heard saying: "During that vote-seeking phase, apparently some cooker blast happened somewhere – it's being said. A blast in a cooker! Where was it, which cooker? In an auto? They're saying a terrorist came here. Where did this terrorist come from?" Ashoka said: "It is unfortunate for Karnataka that individuals driven by narrow political gains, who go as far as defending anti-national elements as 'brothers' for a handful of votes, are positioning themselves as contenders for the CM post."

15-day sultan: Karjol targets Siddaramaiah

BJP MP Govind Karjol described chief minister Siddaramaiah as "Pandrah din ka sultan" (Sultan for 15 days), insisting he would not continue in office beyond that period. Karjol's remarks come amid intense speculation of a change in CM after May 4, when results of assembly elections to four states and one Union territory, along with bypolls to two assembly constituencies in Karnataka, are scheduled to be announced. "With the fight for the CM chair in Congress, there seems to be no administration at Vidhana Soudha. The result for Siddaramaiah's CM chair fight will also be declared along with election results on May 4," Karjol, a former deputy chief minister, told reporters.

State govt will publish annual vacancy lists

▸ Continued from page 1 (Other Book)

To boost transparency and curb lobbying, govt will publish annual vacancy lists and the pool of eligible candidates, ahead of such exercise. The draft prescribes minimum tenures, including two years for key officials and four years for FDAs, while enforcing compulsory transfers for those serving extended periods in high-value zone-A areas, such as Bengaluru Metropolitan Region. Senior sub-registrars and sub-registrars who complete five out of first eight years of service in zone-A, and FDAs and stenographers who complete six years in zone A, will be moved out. They can subsequently opt for postings only outside zone A.

Safeguards have been included for physically challenged employees, along with preferential postings for certain categories of women employees. Provisions have also been made to accommodate spouses in the same or nearby locations.

The draft notification invites objections and suggestions within 15 days.

Indecent dances affect pupils: Govt

▸ Continued from page 1 (Other Book)

The circular holds headmasters and school managements responsible for the selection of songs and choreography during events.

Emphasising that schools are spaces for shaping children's values and character, the circular noted that performances perceived as inappropriate could negatively impact students' mental well-being, discipline and moral development.

"Performing such dances will have a bad impact on the mental health and moral values of children. This will create indiscipline and will harm the sanctity of education," the circular said.

The move follows a representation from Karnataka Rakshina Vedike Swabhimani Bana (Bengaluru unit) earlier this year, raising concerns about the nature of songs and dances being performed in some school events.

It's a girl! B'gavi family gives newborn a grand welcome

Ravindra.Uppar
@timesofindia.com

Belagavi: In a heartening gesture, social activist Sambhaji Thorawat and his wife Suman accorded a grand welcome to their newborn granddaughter in Belagavi district Monday.

The family in Nippani taluk's Barwad village celebrated with fireworks, distributed jalebis and organised a vibrant procession – complete with music and floral showers. The unique celebration drew widespread appreciation.

The baby girl was born to Vaibhavi Thorawat and her husband Vicky Subhash Kamble, residents of Senapati Kapshi in Maharashtra.

Suman described the birth of the child as a blessing, saying the family believed Goddess Mahalaxmi had entered their home.

Sambhaji said: "We organised celebrations to send out a strong message to society. We do not differentiate between a boy and a girl."

"Having worked as a social activist for the past 26 years, and also as a journalist, I have closely observed these social imbalances based on gender discrimination. It is important that society stops considering girls as inferior to boys and instead recognises their true value," Sambhaji added.

TOI

Fireworks at the home of Sambhaji Thorawat and his wife Suman in Barwad village Monday

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OBITUARY
IN MEMORIAM
18th Year Remembrance

Smt. R. PILLAGURAMMA
(W/o. Late Sri A. S. Yellappa Reddy)
Born : 01-04-1942
Expired: 29.04.2008
You will always live in our hearts and Memories, Guiding and inspiring us at all times.
FAMILY MEMBERS

SAD DEMISE
SAD DEMISE

RAMANI RAMAN
W/o Late Capt. TBP Raman
You were a treasured part of our lives, and your presence will be deeply missed by your loving family and all who had the privilege of knowing you.
Viewing @ 597, 6th G Cross, 6th Block, Koramangala, Bangalore 560095
Cremation on 29/04/2026, 2pm @ Wilson Garden Crematorium.
Harsha V Raman: 9986069176

OBITUARY
DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS
In Loving Memory of

Sunil Kumar Sood
12th Dec.1941 – 28th April 2026
It is with very heavy hearts that we share the peaceful passing of our beloved Father, at home on 28th April 2026, aged 84.
A devoted husband, loving & caring father, and adoring grandfather, Sunil lived a life filled with warmth, kindness, and quiet strength.
Though our hearts ache at his absence, we find comfort in knowing that our father's legacy lives on, in the family he raised, the memories he gifted us, and the countless lives he touched with his gentle & kind spirit.
Forever loved, forever missed.
Renu, Anish, Kirti, Nihal, Aadhyyaa, Arvind, Shabana, Aadi & Vir
Cortege departure at 1pm. Funeral at Kalpalli at 2pm

OBITUARY
BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCES
Birthday Remembrance

TAAMARA THÉRÉSE JOHN
BORN: 29-4-1990
DEPARTED: 18-9-2003
We kiss your eyes each day,
And hold your hands in prayer.
To celebrate your life in tears,
And bless the day you were born...
Most beloved child
Our precious little Angel,
We miss you,
And the beauty of your smile.
Rest in the arms of the Lord, our Dearest, Forever in lasting peace.
Appa, Amma & Yohann

REMEMBRANCE
SHARING MEMORIES

In Loving Memory of
Our Beloved
Sri. Sampath
29.04.2026
On this Special Day and your Birthday, We all miss your presence, love and your blessings.
Fondly Remembered by
Wife, Children's & Grandchildren's

5th Year Rememberance.
K SUNDAR RAJ (SPM)
13-02-1972 to 29-04-2021
Fondly remembered by
Parents, Siblings,
Spouse & Kids.
Ganga Nilayam, KGF

TO BOOK AN OBITUARY AD PLEASE CALL
18001205474 (Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO Ads.timesofindia.com

Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board, Pune (MSAMB)

e-Tender Notice (Second Call)

MSAMB invites e-Tender for Construction of Godown having its storage capacity 1000 MT at Agricultural Produce Market Committee Dondaicha, District Dhule (Maharashtra State) Estimate cost of said work is Rs.132.17 Lakh (GST Extra).
For details, please visit www.msamb.com and https://mahatenders.gov.in.

Managing Director

आईआरईएल (इंडिया) लिमिटेड IREL (India) Limited

Formerly Indian Rare Earths Limited
(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)
(A Government of India Undertaking)
CIN : U15100MH1950GOI008187 Website : www.irel.co.in
ISO 9001: 2015, ISO 14001: 2015 & ISO 45001 : 2018 Company

आज़ादी का अमृत महोत्सव

संदर्भ – निविदा 26-27/2 निविदा नोटिस दि. 18.04.2026 /Ref: ADVT.NO.26-27/2 TENDER NOTICE Date: 18.04.2026
IREL (India) Limited, Chavara invites Bid for the following items / job descriptions.

कार्य सं./Event No. (GeM)	कार्य/वस्तु विवरण / Job / Item Description
GEM/2026/B/7453837	Engagement of 2 No wheel loaders on hourly chargeable basis at VT mining area For 18000 hrs

विस्तृत निविदा फार्म http://irel.co.in or http://gem.gov.in वेबसाइट से डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं। निविदा में कोई शुद्धिपत्र / विस्तार वेबसाइट में ही डाल सकते हैं।
Bidder may download tender document from http://irel.co.in or http://gem.gov.in website. Any corrigendum / extension to above tenders shall be hosted in above websites only.

CBC 48139/11/0003/2627

ह. प्रधान, चवरा / -Sd/- Head, Chavara

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, HSR Division,
HSR Layout, BDA Complex, Bengaluru-560102.

Tender Notification No: BBMP/EE/HSR D/Tend-02/2026-27 Date: 28.04.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)
Two Cover Tender

(Through GOK KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

The Executive Engineer, HSR Division, GBA, HSR Division, HSR Layout, BDA Complex, Bengaluru-560102, invites tender from eligible Contractors registered in Bengaluru South city Corporation, or equivalent Registration with/ KPWD/ CPWD/ BWSSB/ Railways/ MES/ National Highway or any state Government Organizations for the Construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1.	Annual Maintenance of footpaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 31 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 70,000/-. Category : Others.**
2.	Annual Maintenance of foopaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 32 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 35,000/-. Category : SC.**
3.	Annual Maintenance of foopaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 69 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 35,000/-. Category : SC.**
4.	Annual Maintenance of foopaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 70 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 70,000/-. Category : Others.**
5.	Annual Maintenance of foopaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 71 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 70,000/-. Category : Others.**
6.	Annual Maintenance of foopaths, Desilting of drains, shoulder and grating cleaning, resetting of broken slabs and paver blocks and other works in ward No. 72 for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 35.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 35,000/-. Category : ST.**
7.	Filling of potholes, other improvements and Maintenance works in kudlu sub division (wardNo.31 & 32 each ward 20 Lakhs). **Estimated Amount: 40.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 80,000/-. Category : Others.**
8.	Filling of potholes, other improvements and Maintenance works in Ibballur sub division (ward No.69 & 70 each ward 20 Lakhs). **Estimated Amount: 40.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 40,000/-. Category : SC.**
9.	Filling of potholes, other improvements and Maintenance works in Ibballur sub division (wardNo.71 & 72 cach ward 20 Lakhs). **Estimated Amount: 40.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 80,000/-. Category : Others**
10.	Annual Maintenance for filling of potholes and maintenance of footpath and desilting of drains and shoulders in arterial and sub arterial roads in ward No. 31 & 32 in kudlu sub division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 30.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 60,000/-. Category : Others**
11.	Annual Maintenance for filling of potholes and maintenance of footpath and desilting of drains and shoulders in arterial and sub arterial roads in ward No. 69 & 70 in Ibballur sub division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 30.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 60,000/-. Category : Others**
12.	Annual Maintenance for filling of potholes and maintenance of footpath and desilting of drains and shoulders in arterial and sub arterial roads in ward No. 71 & 72 in Ibballur sub division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 30.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 30,000/-. Category : CAT-I**
13.	Annual Maintenance for procurement of cold mix tar bags for HSR Layout Division. **Estimated Amount: 12.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 30,000/-. Category : Others**
14.	Emergency Repairs & Maintenance works under revolving fund for HSR Layout Division. **Estimated Amount: 18.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 27,000/-. Category : CAT-II(A)**
15.	Providing and supplying of Tipper & Labours for immersion of Ganesh Idols in ward No. 31 & 32 in kudlu sub Division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 5.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 12,500/-. Category : Others**
16.	Providing and supplying of Tipper & Labours for immersion of Ganesh Idols in ward No. 69 & 70 in Ibbaluru sub Division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 5.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 12,500/-. Category : Others**
17.	Providing and supplying of Tipper & Labours for immersion of Ganesh Idols in ward No. 71 & 72 in kudlu sub Division for the year 2026-27. **Estimated Amount: 10.00 Lakhs, EMD : Rs. 25,000/-. Category : Others**

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender Documents can be Downloaded Through website **http://KPPP.karnataka.gov.in** from **02.05.2026. (2)** Last date submission of tender documents on or before **12.05.2026. at 16.00 hours (3)** Tender will be opened on the website http://KPPP.karnataka.gov.in in the office of the Executive Engineer, HSR division on **13.05.2026. at 16.30 Hours onwards.**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, HSR Division, BSCC

CENTRAL SILK TECHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

CENTRAL SILK BOARD
(Ministry of Textiles - Government of India)
BTM Layout, Madivala, Bengaluru - 560 068
Phone: +91-80-2628 2699 Email: cstriban.csb@nic.in Website: cstri.res.in

No.CSB/CSTRI/JRF-PA/3 (287)/2025-26-ES

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

Date: 29.04.2026

Applications are invited for the position of One **Project Assistant** (PA) under the project titled "Salt and alkali free reactive dyeing on silk - A sustainable approach". The appointment will be on a temporary basis and up to December 2027 or until completion of the project, whichever is earlier. The position is co-terminus with the project. Interested & eligible candidates may attend Walk-In-Interview on **20.05.2026** at **10.00** AM at the above address. For details, refer websites: **cstri.res.in** & **csb.gov.in**.

CBC: **41109/11/0001/2627**

Sd/-
Director

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED

(Wholly Owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites tender against **Enquiry No. BESCOM/ 2026-27/IND0252** for Procurement of Safety Shoes.
Bid documents available on **30.04.2026 onwards.** Last date for bid submission: **15.05.2026, 17.00 Hrs.** Opening of bid document: **16.05.2026, 17.15 Hrs.**
The Tender can be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring Bidders need to register on KPP Portal. Further Bidders can take assistance with KPP Portal helpdesk contact numbers (+91-8046010000, +91-8068948777, 09240214000 & 09240214001) or email at support@eprochelpdesk.com

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

Sd/-
Chief General Manager, Ele., Procurement,
BESCOM, Bengaluru-560 001.

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division,
Yelahanka Zone-2,MEI Layout, Bagalagunte,
Hesaragatta Main Road, Bengaluru - 560 073.

No:BNCC/EE/DD/TEND/02/2025-26 **Date: 28-04-2026**

CORRIGENDUM-01

Sub: Change of Calendar of events of the Tender Notification
Ref:1) This office KPP Portal Tender Notification No. BNCC/EE/DD/TEND/02/2026-27 Dated: 18-04-2026
With reference to the above subject, the tender was invited as per notification by this office. Due to Technical reasons the said tender notification Scheduled dates are modified as detailed below:

To be read as : (1) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **08-05-2026** at **3:00** pm. (2) Last Date for uploading the filled proposal on **26-05-2026** at **4:00** pm. (3) Date of Opening of Technical Bid on **27-05-2026** at **4:30**pm.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Dasarahalli Division, Zone-2, BNCC

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
ZILLA PANCHAYATH, BELLARY

Office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Bellary.

No. EE/PRED/BLY/AE-1/Various Heads/2026-27/ **Dt. 23-04-2026.**

Short Tender Notification (Through KPPP Portal only)

On behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Karnataka tenders are invited from the eligible contractors who have enrolled in Panchayath Raj Engineering Department for 03 works comprising of approved Building works under 2025-26 KKRDB Works through KPPP portal.

Indent No.
1.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26294
2.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26341
3.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26340
4.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26290
5.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26295
6.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26292
7.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26297
8.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26296
9.RDPR/2026-27/BD/WORK_INDENT26325

Contractors are required to submit the tender before 30-04-2026 at 5.30 PM by uploading the relevant documents through KPPP portal website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in by downloading the formats for submission of tenders from 23-04-2026 to 30-04-2026 at 5.30 PM. Tenders will be opened through KPPP portal on 02-05-2026 at 10.30 AM Any changes in the notification will be published KPPP website only. Accepting/rejection of tenders without assigning reason is reserved. Any details can be obtained in person at the office or through telephone No. 08392-266173.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Ballari
DIPR/Ballari/2026-27/KSMCA/RO No/97

ASSISTANT CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS, SOCIAL FORESTRY DIVISION RAICHUR

No:ACF/SFDR/KPPP.Proc.Tender/CR- /2026-27 Date: 27-04-2026

e-Tender Notification

(ಮೊದಲನೇಯ ಬಾರಿಗೆ)

This is to inform to the the public that, for the Financial Year 2026-27. Assistant Conservator of Forests, Social Forestry Division, Raichur has invited Tender for Forest Works through e-Procurement (Website Link http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in) two cover system under Social Forestry and RKVY Schemes. During 2026-27 Registered Forest Contractors are eligible for Tender Works. Tender From 27-04-2026 to 06-05-2026 & 07-05-2026 Technical Bids and 08-05-2026 Financial Bid Opening.

For More Details available on the notice board. O/o Assistant Conservator of Forests, Social Forestry Division, Raichur.

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Social Forestry Division, Raichur

DIP/RCR/42/KSMC&A/44/2026-27

कार्यालय मुख्य अभियन्ता, नगर निगम, बरेली

अल्पकालीन पुनः ई-निविदा आमन्त्रण सूचना

पत्रांक: 32/मु0अभि0/नि0वि0/2026-27 दिनांक: 28.04.2026

नगर निगम, बरेली द्वारा नगर निगम, बरेली के कर्मचारियों हेतु रामपुर गार्डन परिसर, बरेली (3.0ए0) में 2 बी0एच0के एवं 3 बी0एच0के आवासीय भवनों का डिजाइन, इंजीनियरिंग, सामग्री की आपूर्ति, निर्माण, परीक्षण, कमीशनिंग एवं हैंडओवर कार्य EPC (Engineering, Procurement & Construction) (ई0पी0सी) आधार पर कराये जाने हेतु योग्य, अनुभवी एवं पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों / फर्मों से टू-बिड पद्धति (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) के माध्यम से निम्न प्रकार से ई-निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा खोले जाने की तिथि में यदि अवकाश होगा तो निविदायें अगले कार्य दिवस में खोली जायेंगी।

अवस्थापना निधि के अन्तर्गत प्रथम ई-निविदा आमंत्रित हेतु (क्रमांक सं0. 1)	
ई-निविदा डाउनलोड प्रारम्भ की तिथि/समय	30.04.2026 (11:00 AM)
ई-निविदा अपलोड की प्रारम्भ तिथि/समय	30.04.2026 (10:00 PM)
ई-निविदा अपलोड की अन्तिम तिथि/समय	07.05.2026 (05:00 PM)
ई-निविदा खोली जाने की तिथि/समय	08.05.2026 (12:00 PM)
फाईनेशियल ई-निविदा खोली जाने हेतु	After Technical Evaluation

कार्य का विवरण, नियम व शर्तें नगर निगम बरेली के वेबसाईट www.nagarnigambareilly.com पर ई-निविदा लिंक एवं ई-पोर्टल http://etender.up.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है। किसी परिवर्तन, संशोधन व अतिरिक्त सूचनाओं के लिये उक्त वेबसाइट पर देखी जा सकती है।

मुख्य अभियन्ता
नगर निगम, बरेली।

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-22185)

Tender Enquiry No. 379/SSD-169/S-I/2026

Dy. CE/Sub-Station (Design)/ TS Organization, C-1 Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for design, manufacturing, testing and delivery of 105 nos 15kV NCTs of assorted ratios. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 29.04.2026 (11:00 AM onwards).

Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

C537/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10979

Bi-RIDE
BENGALURU INTEGRATED RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE LIMITED

BENGALURU SUBURBAN TRANSPORT PROJECT (BSTP)

Website: www.kride.in Email ID: gmprocurement@kride.in

e-TENDER NOTICE

Tender Notice No.: Bi-RIDE/MANPOWER/2026, Date: 28.04.2026.
Tender ID: 2026_KRIDE_275910_1.

"Providing of Skilled Manpower, Housekeeping and Security Services on Outsource basis to Bi-RIDE Offices / Field Works."

Last date for submission of bids is **29.05.2026 IST 15:00 Hrs.** For details visit **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app**

DIPR/CP/YC/398/2026-27

Sd/- GENERAL MANAGER /Procurement/Bi-RIDE

KridePrm Kride Bsrp kride_bsrp KRIDE,BSRP

Government of Karnataka
Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department

Office of the Director, No. 34, 1st Floor, Lotus Towers, Race Course Road, Bangalore -560 001
Phone : 080-22261787

No.: STWD/ED-2/CR-33/2025-26 Date:27.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through KPP portal only)

Tender is invited for Purchase and Supply of Desk cum Benches for Maharshi Valmiki Adivasi Tribal Residential Schools at the cost of Rs. 3,39,85,284/- under Karnataka Public Procurement Transparency Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through E-Procurement Portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** and the last date for submission of tenders is **28.05.2026.** Interested bidders can submit their tenders through e-procurement portal and Further information can be obtained from the E-Procurement Portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

DIPR/CP/JA/390/2026-27

Sd/- Director,
Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department

JAIPUR VIDYUT VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM-I), MM Building,
Old Power House Premises, Near Ram Mandir, Banipark, Jaipur-302006,
Tel. 0141-2208098, E-Mail id:- semm1@jvvnl.org

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING BID

e-tenders are invited for purchase 33 KV Lattice Structure 42' Long, and 33/11 KV S/S Str. for Urban Area (TN-5081) (UBN-VVN2627GLOB00012). All the details regarding tenders are available at web site **http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/jvvnl and www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in.**

Raj.Samwad/C/26/1659 JPR-3145 (2026) SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (MM-I)

For Electricity Complaints Toll Free No. 1800 180 6507

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-3, Narayanpur-585219 Tq: Hunasagi, Dist: Yadgir
Email: kbjnl_eedam@yahoo.in

NO. KBJNL/DSU-3/PB-1/Quotation/2026-27/89 Date:23.04.2026

Quotation Notification

Reference: Karnataka Government Amendment Order No.:Ksampa:04:Vapraja:2017 Date:19-01-2017

The undersigned officer on behalf of the Managing Director, Krishna Bhagya Jal Nigam Limited **(KBJNL), Bengaluru** invite quotations from qualified agencies for the Item of works required for preparation of estimate of Operation and Maintenance of SCADA Phase-1 canal automation project implemented under Narayanpur left bank Canal of Karnataka state. The detailed technical specifications of the items are published on the official website of **KBJNL**: **www.kbjnl.karnataka.gov.in**

Interested qualified agencies are requested to submit sealed Quotation rates excluding GST to this office on or before **5.30 PM on 12.05.2026.** The sealed quotations will be opened on **13.05.2026 at 11.00 AM.**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-3,
Narayanapur

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website : www.pspcl.in

GVK Power (Goindwal Sahib) Limited
Regd. Office : Plot No. 10, Paigah Colony, Sardar Patel Road, Secunderabad-500003 Telangana, India CIN : U40109TG1997PLC028483
(A wholly owned subsidiary of Guru Amar Das Thermal Power Limited, GATPL)
(A step down wholly owned subsidiary of Punjab State Power Corporation Limited, PSPCL)

HOD - OPERATION, GATP, Goindwal Sahib, invites E-Tender for Procurement of Light Diesel Oil (LDO).

1	Tender Enquiry No. 148/GATP/OPERATION/20018156 dated 28.04.2026. "**Procurement of Light Diesel Oil (LDO)** at 2X270 MW Guru Amardas Thermal Plant (GATP), Goindwal Sahib, Distt.: Tam Taran, Punjab as per details given in the tender specifications."

For detailed NIT & tender specifications, please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 28.04.2026 from 17:00 Hrs. onwards.
Note : Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**
GATP-42/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10978

DELHI International Airport Limited | GMR

Delhi International Airport Limited
Regd. Office: New Udaan Bhawan, Opp. Terminal 3, Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi – 110037, India
CIN NO. U63033DL2006PTC146936
E-mail: dial.ald@gmrgroup.in
Website: www.newdelhiairport.in

TENDER NOTICE

Delhi International Airport Limited invites bids in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for selection of a bidder to undertake and implement world class hospitality development at Aerocity, New Delhi through an international competitive bidding process. Interested applicants may procure the copy of RFP as per details provided at www.newdelhiairport.in.

DIAL/236/PREM ASSOCIATES

उच्च शिक्षा निदेशालय, उत्तराखण्ड

नवाड़खेड़ा गौलापार, हल्द्वानी (नैनीताल) पिन-263126
9997686960 E-Mail-highereducation.director@gmail.com

दिनांक 28.04.2026

ई-निविदा

उच्च शिक्षा विभागान्तर्गत **स्वामी विवेकानन्द ई पुस्तकालय** योजना संचालित किये जाने हेतु उच्च शिक्षण संस्थानों में उच्च शिक्षा ग्रहण कर रहे छात्रों हेतु Statewide Digital e Resources Access Management and User Engagement Platform with Integrated AI-Enabled Web Scale Discovery Search Engine हेतु ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। इससे सम्बन्धित सभी सूचनायें http//www.uktenders.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। आमंत्रण ई-निविदा का विवरण निम्नवत् है:-

क्र0 सं0	विवरण	दिनांक
1	पोर्टल में निविदा उपलब्ध होने की तिथि	29 अप्रैल, 2026
2	निविदा हेतु प्री बिड सम्मेलन	12 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:00 बजे आई0आर0डी0टी0 सभागार, सर्वे चौक, देहरादून
3	प्री बिड में उठाए गए बिन्दुओं पर स्पष्टीकरण ऑनलाईन अपलोड	16 मई, 2026
3	निविदा जमा (Online) करने की अन्तिम तिथि	26 मई, 2026 सांय 5:00 बजे तक
4	निविदा प्रपत्र की उपलब्धता	http//www.uktenders.gov.in
5	निविदा की तकनीकी प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की तिथि व समय	28 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:00 बजे
6	निविदा के वित्तीय प्रस्ताव खोले जाने की सम्भावित तिथि	30 मई, 2026 पूर्वान्ह 11:00 बजे

निदेशक, उच्च शिक्षा,
उत्तराखण्ड हल्द्वानी।

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED

(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & An ISO 27001-2022 Certified Company)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) on e-procurement

The **APTRANSCO** invites online bids for **RFP NO.APTRANSCO/STAMC/2026-27** for "Providing Consulting Services to set-up State Transmission Asset Management Centre (STAMC) & ISO 55001 Asset Management Practices". The tender document can be downloaded from website **http//tender.apeprocurement.gov.in from 11:00 hrs on Dt: 29.04.2026. Contact No's: 0866-2429230, Extn: 2024, 3434.**

R.O. No.GMCC/APTRANSCO/24/26-27 **Sd/- Chief Engineer/Transmission**

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED

e-Procurement Tender Notice (Paper Notification)

TGSPDCL intends to float tender for procurement of (a) HT Trivector Meters (b) 33KV, 220V DC 1600A Feeder VCBs with CTs of ratio 400-200-100/1-1A (W/o CRPs & IED Relays) (c) RS Joists 175x85 mm on e-procurement platform.
For further details of each item above, please visit www.tgsouthernpower.org, www.tender.telangana.gov.in, www.auction.telangana.gov.in.
Phone: 040-23431360, 1033, 1035, 1026

Sd/-
for **CHIEF ENGINEER (P&MM)**
TGSPDCL, Hyderabad

DIPR R.O. No. : 70-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/2026-27, Date: 28-04-2026

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LIMITED

(A Government of India Undertaking)

OPEN E-TENDER (SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM) INVITATION NOTICE

Name of Work: Supply, Erection, Testing & Commissioning of Power transformer & Auto Transformers for the projects being executed by Konkan Railway Corporation Limited. **Notice No: KR/CO/EL/KATNI-SGRL/T/2A/26 Dtd: 29/04/2026. Completion Period:** 18 (Eighteen) Months. **Estimated Cost:** ₹ 81,50,40,000/- Excluding GST. **EMD:** ₹ 42,25,200/-. **Last Date & time for Online Submission of Tender:** 20/05/2026 up to 15.00 Hrs. **Opening of Tender:** On 20/05/2026 at 15.30 Hrs. Amendments / Corrigendum if any, would be uploaded on IREPS website only. **Submission of Tender Documents:** Through IREPS. Manual Tender Documents shall not be accepted.

PSPCL Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. office PSEB Head Office. The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB10SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact No. 96461-36447)

(Short Term Tender Notice)

Tender Enquiry No: 05 /ASR/GC/TS/PSPCL Dated: 29.04.2026

Addl. S.E, Grid Construction .Division, Amrits'ar has invited e-tender for Outsourcing work of erection, testing and commissioning of Additional 3 no. 20 MVA Power Transformers (at 66 Kv S/s Shehjada Kalan, Sohian and Lakhana) along with complete bay equipments on partial turnkey mode under RDSS scheme' under Grid Construction Division, Pspcl, Amritsar under Grid Const. Circle, Pspcl, Ludhiana.
For more details-please refer to website **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from 29.04.2026, 5:00 pm onwards
Note: Corrigendum and addendum if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** only

C 538/26, DPR/Pb.:1079/12/2026-27/10980

KERALA CLIMATE RESILIENT AGRI VALUE CHAIN MODERNISATION PROJECT (KERA)

SPECIFIC PROCUREMENT NOTICE

The Project Director, Kerala Climate Resilient Agri Value Chain Modernisation (KERA) Project (The World Bank Project ID No.: P178254) invites expression of interest (EoI) for the following Request for Expression of Interest (REoI) from eligible consultants:

1. Consulting services: Hiring of Agri-Finance Specialist

Last date of submission of EoI is **23rd May 2026,11:00 AM.** The tender Document can be downloaded from KERA website (**https://kera.kerala.gov.in/notifications**) starting from **24th April 2026, 10:00 AM.**

Sd/- Project Director

Government of Karnataka

Directorate of Child Protection
District Child Protection Unit, Shivamogga

Short-Term e-Tender Notice - Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement (KPPP)

Short-Term Tender is invited through KPP Portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999, Rules 2000 for availing Human Resource Services as mentioned in Annexure – 1 for a period of one year required to Government Boys Children Home, Government Girls Children Home, Government Observation Homes and Government Special Adoption organizations coming under the jurisdiction of Directorate of Child Protection and District Child Protection Unit, Shivamogga for the year 2026-27. Interested, eligible Tenderers can submit Tender Bids through https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 27.04.2026 to 04.05.2026 up to 4.00 PM. E-Procurement Tender No.: DCP/ 2026-27/SE0261 Date: 27.04.2026. For further information contact District Child Protection Unit, Alkola, Shivamogga on phone no.: 08182-295709 during office hours.

Sd/- District Child Protection Officer,
District Child Protection Unit, Shivamogga.

DIPR/smg/Ksmca/26-27/129/04/144

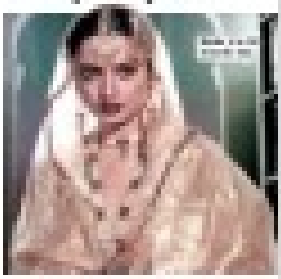
I cherish the relationships I have built in the industry over time: Subhash Ghai

Sanjay was unfortunately stuck mapping the sequel for years. Even during this time in jail, he kept up efforts to find a way. Finally, I went to Sanjay Dutt (he) and told him the concept and story

Sarika Chunar Teri row

Dutt apologises before NCW, pledges to sponsor education for 50 girls

Restored version of Umrao Jaan set for European premiere



TIMES NATION

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026

AVOID CREATING NEGATIVITY AROUND CHAR DHAM YATRA: UTTARAKHAND CM DHAMI TO PEOPLE

PRIME MINISTER MODI TO INAUGURATE 594-KM-LONG SIX-LANE GANGA EXPRESSWAY IN MEERUT TODAY

HACK OF THE DAY — **KEEP ONE MESSAGE EVEN IN DISAPPEARING CHATS**

WHAT IT SOLVES: Lets you use disappearing messages for privacy while still preserving a truly important line, such as an address, OTP backup, or meeting detail

WHAT TO DO: Use WhatsApp's kept messages feature instead of turning off disappearing messages for the entire chat

STEPS:

1. **Open** a chat that already uses disappearing messages
2. **Find** the specific message you do not want to lose
3. **Use** the Keep option before the message timer expires
4. **Check** that the message is now marked as kept
5. **Use** this only for genuinely important messages, not everything

NOTE: This is the rare privacy feature that gives you nuance instead of forcing an all-or-nothing choice

SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

What global fertility map looks like

Replacement level fertility — needed to keep a population size constant — is 2.1 births per woman. In China, women have about one child on average; South Korea's rate is 0.8. India's total fertility rate (TFR) is between 1.9 and 2. The highest rates are in Chad and Somalia, at 5.9 live births per woman

Countries with fertility rates above or below replacement level, 2025

Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2026

Plea in top court to review 'Hinduism as way of life' tag

Dhananjay.Mahapatra
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Midway through the 'faith vs fundamental right' debate emanating from the customary ban on entry of women in the 10-50 years age group into the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple, a Hindu party on Tuesday requested a nine-judge Supreme Court bench to review its 30-year-old judgment declaring Hinduism as a "way of life".

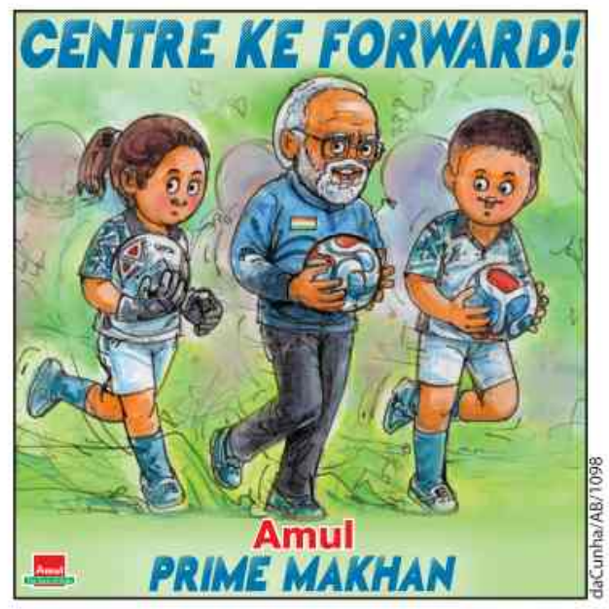
Articulating the objection to the ruling in the 1996 Ramesh Yeshwant Prabhoo judgment by a three-judge bench that Hinduism "may broadly be described as a way of life and nothing more", a lawyer appearing for the Hindu party said Hinduism is not a way of life, but a oceanic confluence and assimilation of infinite number of distinct religious beliefs and faiths.

During the ninth day of proceedings before a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices B V Nagarathna, M M Sundresh, A Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, A G Masih, P B Varale, R Mahadevan and J Bagchi, advocate D V Singh said that in order to decide what constituted an essential Hindu religious practice, the court must decide what is "Hinduism and Hindu Dharma", and suggested that SC could take help of the Bhagavad Gita for this.

This mirrored senior advocate M R Shamshad's request on Thursday to the nine-judge bench to review the 1994 Ismail Faruqui judgment by a five-judge bench, which while rejecting the challenge to govt acquisition of the then-disputed Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid site had ruled that mosque is not essential for offering namaz. He had said masjid is the spirit of Islam and constituted core belief of Muslims.

In the Ramesh Yeshwant Prabhoo judgment, SC had said, "When we think of Hindu religion, we find it difficult, if not impossible, to define Hindu religion or even adequately describe it." "Unlike other religions in the world, Hindu religion does not claim any one prophet; it does not worship any one God; it does not subscribe to any one dogma; it does not believe in any one philosophic concept; it does not follow any one set of religious rites or performances; in fact, it does not appear to satisfy the narrow traditional features of any religion or creed. It may broadly be described as a way of life and nothing more," the court had said.

"Ordinarily, Hindutva is understood as a way of life or a state of mind, and it is not to be equated with or understood as religious Hindu fundamentalism," it said.



daCunha/AB/1098

Maharashtra occultist held for rape

Nashik: Shrirampur city police in Maharashtra's Ahilyanagar district have arrested a 41-year-old occultist on charges of rape, cheating and practising black magic after a 35-year-old woman filed a complaint alleging that he sexually assaulted her repeatedly and extorted nearly Rs 20 lakh from her. TNN

Delhi HC judge in Kejriwal row recuses from Karti plea

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma of Delhi HC Tuesday recused herself from hearing Congress MP Karti Chidambaram's plea seeking quashing of a criminal case lodged by CBI against him, citing a "gross delay" of nearly two decades.

The probe agency has alleged that he helped an alcoholic beverage company in connection with a ban on duty-free sale of its whisky. Justice Sharma said the matter be listed before another bench, and posted it for July 21. The same bench had recently refused to recuse from matters involving Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia in the alleged Delhi liquor policy case. Karti has argued the case relates to 2004–2010, while the FIR was lodged only in 2025, and that prior sanction under Section 17-A of the Prevention of Corruption Act was not obtained. The plea says no preliminary inquiry was conducted, no specific public servant named, and no allegation of illegal gratification made. The case stems from a 2018 CBI preliminary inquiry into alleged irregularities in FIPB clearance during P Chidambaram's tenure as Union finance minister.

RECUSAL TERMS: AAP netas, including Arvind Kejriwal (L) had sought recusal citing conflict of interest. Karti Chidambaram's plea cited delay in lodging case

Vigilant loco pilot notices wall of fire, reverses train for 4km

Ramendra.Singh
@timesofindia.com

Bhopal: A loco pilot in Madhya Pradesh reversed a passenger train for nearly 4km after spotting a wall of fire from illegal stubble burning approaching the Maksi-Ruthiyai section of the Gwalior-Indore line on Monday afternoon, averting a major accident, reports Ramendra Singh.

The fire broke out around 12.45pm in fields between Biaora-Rajgarh and Pachore stations in the Bhopal railway division and was driven rapidly toward the tracks by strong winds. The pilot of the Bina-Nagda passenger train reversed the rakes and moved passengers away from the blaze. The Sabarmati Express from Guna to Ahmedabad was stopped at Biaora as the fire neared, with rail traffic suspended till 4pm, leaving passengers stranded for over three hours.

Officials praised the loco pilot's quick decision, with Bhopal railway division PRO Nawal Agarwal saying it prevented a potential tragedy. The loco pilot has not yet been named but is expected to be rewarded. A probe has been ordered into the fire, which officials say was caused by stubble burning.

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90-year-old refuses to settle defamation case, HC adjourns it to 2046

Mumbai: The Bombay HC on Tuesday adjourned to 2046 a defamation suit for Rs 20 crore against managing committee members of a south Mumbai housing society by a senior citizen, now aged almost 90, and her daughter, **reports Swati Deshpande**. "I do not wish to state anything further except that this matter should not be taken up for the next 20 years," said Justice Jitendra Jain, sitting singly, when an attempt at a settlement failed and she insisted on pursuing the suit.

The dispute allegedly arose about a decade ago.

On April 20, the HC requested both sides to try and settle, saying the matter could be worked out with defendants giving an unconditional apology. On Tuesday, when the matter came up as scheduled, the erstwhile committee members, represented by ALMT Legal, said they would unconditionally apologise without prejudice.

However, the woman, almost 90, still insisted on going ahead with the legal battle, the HC order, a one-pager, observed on Tuesday.

"This is one of the matters where the ego fight between the parties at their fag end of their life clogs the system, which prevents the court from taking up the matters which really requires more priority," the high court said.

The dispute was over alleged collection of funds towards repair and maintenance of the society. In the minutes of a meetings, she was referred to as a "defaulter," which led to the filing of the defamation suit.

One of the issues in the suit, a 2018 order said, was where the woman proves that a notice of Aug 2015 calling for an annual general meeting of the society, Shyam Cooperative Housing Society, and conduct and statements of defendants in a Sept 2015 meeting, were defamatory towards her?

In another year-old order, on March 27, 2025, another single-judge bench of Justice Abhay Ahuja noted that both the plaintiff and defendants were unrepresented in court. He adjourned it to July 2025, clarifying that "if none appears for the plaintiff on the next date, this court will consider dismissing the suit".

On Tuesday, the woman was represented by an advocate. Justice Jain said, "List this matter after 2046. At any cost, this matter should not be given priority on the ground that the petitioners are senior citizens or super senior citizens. It is expressly made clear that this matter will not be taken up for hearing before 2046."

3 in Maharashtra lose vision after surgery

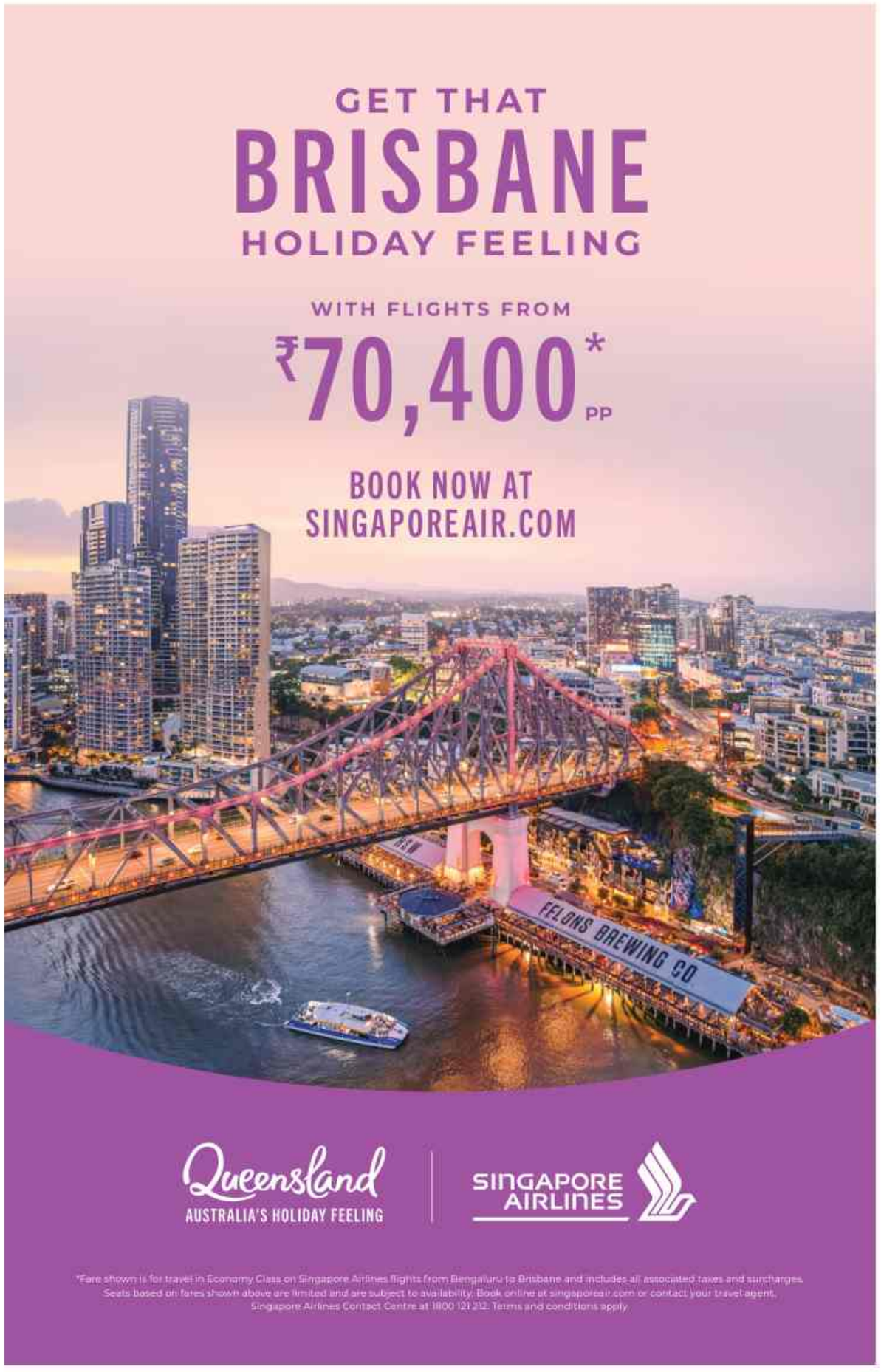
Chandrapur: Health authorities in Maharashtra's Chandrapur suspended registration of Bramhapuri's Christanand Hospital and sealed its operation theatre and inpatient department after allegations that post-cataract surgery infections left at least three patients with severe vision loss, **reports Mazhar Ali**.

Action was taken Monday by civil surgeon Dr Mahadev Chinchole after a preliminary inquiry found violations of the Bombay Nursing Home Act, 1949, and lapses in ophthalmic care standards.

The action was taken on Monday by civil surgeon Dr Mahadev Chinchole following a preliminary inquiry that revealed multiple violations of the Bombay Nursing Home Act, 1949, and major lapses in ophthalmic care standards.

The missionary-run hospital faced complaints after cataract surgeries led to infections and permanent vision loss. The missionary-run hospital, known for affordable care, faced complaints after Feb cataract surgeries led to infections and permanent vision loss.

Christanand Hospital, operated by a Christian missionary organization and widely known for affordable healthcare services, has long served economically weaker sections across Bramhapuri taluka. However, complaints lodged last month triggered alarm after patients who underwent cataract surgeries in Feb developed infections, leading to permanent damage to their eyesight. Officials found surgeries were done without authorised eye-care beds, violating norms.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At 47.6°C, UP's Banda hottest place in world

Lucknow: Dry hot winds and clear skies pushed Uttar Pradesh into severe heat, with Banda recording 47.6°C on Monday — the highest in the country and the hottest place in the world, IMD data showed, reports **Mohsin Usmani**.

In fact, seven of the Top 10 hotspots are in India and three in Pakistan. Banda has been experiencing severe heat conditions this summer with the maximum temperature on Monday touching 47.6 degrees celsius, the highest in the month of April in 75 years since IMD started keeping records for the district in 1951.

Nawabshah (47.5°C) and Jacobabad (47°C) in Pakistan followed, along with Amraoti (46.6°C) and Wardha (46.5°C) in India. Barmer and Jaisalmer recorded 46.4°C, Akola 46.3°C, while Khajuraho and Pad Idan touched 46°C. IMD said the heat was driven by anti-cyclonic pressure over central India, hot winds from the Thar desert, clear skies, and fewer Western Disturbances leading to lack of rainfall and thunderstorms.

BJP sweeps Guj municipal polls, takes all corporations

Team TOI

Ahmedabad: The governing BJP yet again established its supremacy in Gujarat on Tuesday, sweeping all 15 municipal corporations and 78 of the 84 municipalities, reiterating its complete dominance in cities and towns.

The saffron party also posted a spectacular performance in villages.

The party also performed strongly in rural regions, winning 33 of the 34 district panchayats and 220 of the 260 taluka panchayats. AAP won the Narmada district panchayat, while Congress took the Khadia seat in Ahmedabad, a BJP stronghold for 46 years.

The opposition Congress and Aam Aadmi Party posted some key wins in rural Gujarat, with AAP wresting the Narmada district panchayat from BJP while Congress grabbed Khadia seat, considered a BJP citadel, with the saffron party winning it for 46 years in Ahmedabad city.

Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel flanked by deputy CM Harsh Sanghavi and state BJP chief Jagdish Vishvakarma in Ahmedabad

As votes were counted on Tuesday morning, BJP maintained a winning streak in all municipal corporations. ItBJP swept major cities including Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Jamnagar and Bhavnagar cities while making debuting in nine newly formed municipal corporations — Navsari, Gandhidham, Morbi, Vapi, Anand, Nadiad, Mehsana, Porbandar and Surendranagar. Of the total 1,044 seats in 15 cities, BJP won a staggering 937, Congress 95, and AAP and others got six seats each. Most of AAP's gains as a debutant in Surat city in 2021, when it won 27 seats out of 120, were reversed as its tally fell to just four seats in a single ward.

In the towns, BJP won 78 of the 84 municipalities for which polls were held while Congress won six. In the last elections, in 2021, 81 municipalities had gone to polls, with BJP winning 75, Congress four and others two.

"The bond between Gujarat and the BJP gets even stronger! Gratitude to the people of Gujarat for a sweeping mandate in the mahanagarpalika, nagar palika, taluka panchayat and zilla panchayat elections held across the state," PM Narendra Modi tweeted.

Once the results were in, Aam Aadmi Party and Congress both staked claim as the No. 2 party in Gujarat.

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Human skills for AI-proof career

Safest Roles In Today's Automation Era Are Not Those Closest To Technology, But Those Closest To People

By Sandeep Das

Ram

Rarely does a week go by without news of layoffs circulating. There are many prophecies about how the situation for employees is going to get worse in the years to come. Goldman Sachs has said that 300 million jobs could be displaced by AI over the next decade. Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei has said that AI could eliminate up to 50% of entry-level white-collar jobs in the next few years.

So, what should a corporate employee should do over the next decade, especially in India, where unemployment rate of urban youth rate approximately 1 in 5, according to the ministry of statistics.

The common consensus is that upskilling is the way forward over the next few years. This is only partly true. As an employee, you are not going to make your career layoff-proof by competing with AI. Learning about AI tools will make you more productive, but that doesn't guarantee a career in the future. For instance, in the case of projects like data migration, automation of complex workflows can shift the timeline from a couple of years to a fraction of that time.

The only way to ring-fence your career in the future is to master human-centric skills. The following four skill sets should be non-negotiable for any professional trying to survive and thrive over the next decade:

1. Driving Meaning: The top human skill to master is storytelling. With its immense appeal to the subconscious mind, it drives over 95% of our decisions, is essential for creating impact and crafting a larger narrative.

2. Thinking: In a VUCA (Volatile Uncertain Complex Ambiguous) or BANI (Brittle Anxious Non-linear Incomprehensible) world, strategic thinking becomes key in making choices. The ability to answer questions that are a matter of human judgement is highly valuable as AI still struggles with ambiguity, making trade-offs and taking context-heavy decisions.

3. Connection: In the difficult world we live in, empathy and active listening go a long way in managing global teams, whether it is about managing conflict, building morale or negotiating complex deals. Empathy, as a human skill, can build trust that drives immense influence and collaboration.

4. Influence: One of the most important skills is your individual brand. A strong personal brand attracts opportunities and builds a reputation that makes one irreplaceable.

The fastest-growing roles today are not those that execute but those that influence, advise and decide. The top three areas where independent consultants are in demand are technology, strategy and business development, and finance. Even traditional consulting, strategy and technology consulting is likely to grow rapidly in India.

There are other roles such as those in corporate sales, product managers and digital transformation experts that involve deep human interaction. Such roles will always be in demand and are bound to scale up significantly over the next decade.

(The author is a leadership and business coach)

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Interested candidates may apply to jobs@isme.in
Phone: 080-28019800 | Sarjapur Road, Bengaluru | www.isme.in

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Applications are invited for the following posts as shown against each department. Experienced teaching professionals having passion to serve in an educational institution and actively engage in Research & Innovation are welcome to apply.

Sl. No	Department	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor
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2.	MCA	-	2	-
3.	Aerospace Engineering (BE-Aerospace Engg, M.Tech-Aerospace Engg)	1	3	4
4.	Civil Engineering (M.Tech- Structures)	1	-	-
5.	Mechanical Engineering	1	-	-
6.	Electronics & Telecomn Engineering	1	1	-
7.	Medical Electronics Engg	-	1	1
8.	Biotechnology	-	1	-
9.	Chemistry	1	-	-
10.	School of Architecture	1	-	-
	Assistant Professor for the following departments			
11.	Electronics & Communication Engineering			3
12.	Electrical & Electronics Engg			1
13.	Electronics & Instrumentation Engg			2
14.	MBA			2
15.	Mathematics			2

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  - 15 years of experience in teaching / industry / research.

  (Minimum 3 years at Professor level or 5 years in senior management)
- **Assistant Professor**
  (Commerce, Management & Computer Applications)
  - NET / SLET / SET qualified OR PhD.
  - PhD submitted candidates can also apply.
- **Professor / Associate Professor**
  (Commerce, Management & Computer Applications)
  - Qualifications & experience as per AICTE norms.
  - PhD Mandatory.
- **Administrative Officer**
  - MBA / Postgraduate Degree in relevant field.
  - Minimum 5+ years of experience.
  - Experience in AICTE & NAAC documentation preferred.

Application Process

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4 sniffer dogs join squad on poll duty in Kolkata after training

Dwaipayan.Ghosh
@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: As the city votes on Wednesday, the 40-member Kolkata Police Dog Squad has deployed its newest "explosive experts" — Ina, Tina, Snoopy and Moon — all labradors, on poll duty.

The four — three yellow and one black — recently returned from a seven-month intensive stint at the BSF training centre in Gwalior.

On Wednesday, at least two of them are likely to be deployed independently in booths where VIPs might cast their votes. All four canines, especially the "more experienced" Ina and Tina, are currently undergoing hands-on training by shadowing senior, more experienced detective dogs during active sweeps of rally stages and VVIP corridors.

Given the brutal heat wave in the city, the dogs' daily menu has been adjusted to include yoghurt and glucose to prevent dehydration, with chicken served for lunch.

Bengal turns fortress for Phase-II poll: 2.3L CAPF & 38,297 state cops in place

2,348 'Troublemakers' Locked Up, 653 Non-Bailable Warrants Issued

Dwaipayan Ghosh & Kaushik Pradhan | TNN

BATTLEGROUND WEST BENGAL

Kolkata: Bengal's final phase of assembly elections unfolds under a security grid rarely seen in Indian polls, stretching across 142 constituencies in seven districts. Numbers define the scale: over 2.3 lakh Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel, 38,297 state police, 142 general observers, 95 police observers, 100 expenditure observers, and NIA teams fanning out across sensitive zones.

A sweeping crackdown preceded Wednesday's polling — an election day framed by overwhelming force, close surveillance and a clear message: polling must remain free, fair and fear-free.

In 72 hours, 2,348 alleged troublemakers have been jailed under EC directives, including Trinamool councillors in Panihati and Burdwan. Another 653 non-bailable warrants were issued. "Commission has asked police to ensure no trouble-mongers are outside by dawn," an EC source said. Kolkata stands at the centre of deployment. As many as 274 companies of central forces — around 22,500 personnel — backed by roughly 7,250 city police will secure 5,172 booths across 1,961 premises, highest deployment recorded in the city. Beyond Kolkata, East Burdwan (263 companies) and Hooghly Rural (236) draw heavy presence, reflecting past flashpoints and risk assessments. Nearly 12,000 booths have been classified as critical out of 41,001. Additional CAPF quick-reaction teams will cover Bhangar, Canning, Falta and Sonarpur in South 24 Parganas, and Nadanghat and Ketugram in East Burdwan. Security planning has been calibrated constituency-wise, focusing on vulnerable pockets and interior neighbourhoods.

An armoured vehicle and CAPF personnel patrol in Kolkata on Tuesday

NIA teams have spread across all eight electoral districts, including Khagragarh, where a 2014 blast killed two alleged terrorists and wounded three. Their presence underscores heightened vigilance in areas with a history of extremist activity.

Monitoring will be constant. "All polling stations are under webcasting, and activities are being monitored from control rooms. Immediate action will follow any complaint," Bengal CEO Manoj Agarwal said Tuesday. He urged voters to turn out without fear: "No one will be able to harm you. Entire administration is vigilant."

Ground operations reflect that message. Central forces have intensified route marches, checkpoint inspections and area domination drives. Motorcycle patrols — four CAPF personnel on two bikes, accompanied by Kolkata police — sweep narrow lanes in each police station area, a tactic rolled out since Sunday night and sustained through Tuesday.

More than 800 arrests were made Monday night alone, adding to the surge in preventive detentions. Central teams have also visited sensitive zones, warning local political functionaries to stay within law or face consequences. EC has coupled scale with accountability. Any lapse despite heavy deployment will invite action, Agarwal warned.

First phase turnout touched a record 93.19% across 152 constituencies, raising expectations for a high-participation finale.

Encounter specialist's visit triggers 'Singham versus Pushpa' duel

Dwaipayan.Ghosh
@timesofindia.com

Ajay Pal Sharma in a video that went viral; (R) Jahangir Khan reacts on Tuesday

Kolkata: A 'Singham' versus 'Pushpa' rivalry played out at Falta, around 40km from Kolkata, on Tuesday.

The stage, it seems, was set on Monday, when IPS officer and DIG Ajay Pal Sharma, an "encounter specialist" popularly known as 'Shingham' on his home turf in UP, visited the house of Falta's TMC candidate Jahangir Khan, a strongman, and warned his kin "to be cautious".

On Tuesday, the two nearly crossed paths. As Jahangir's convoy passed by, TMC workers raised slogans of "Joy Bangla" and "Go Back", perhaps having spotted the UP cop. Jahangir too appeared defiant. "If he is Singham, I am Pushpa. Jhukega nahi. In 'Sholay', we saw 'Jo darr gaya, woh mar gaya'. In my dictionary, the word 'fear' does not exist," he thundered.

Meanwhile, TMC MP Mahua Moitra shared archived videos on X showing a man grooving to music at what appeared to be a night-club. She tagged the officer, calling him a "Fair and Lovely babua". "Good to see you enjoying yourself... Hope your policing skills are better than your dancing skills," she wrote.

While a BJP worker said the post "speaks of her taste", Sharma refused to comment.

Quite a few videos of the officer doing the rounds and announcing stern warnings against mischief-mongering have been circulating on social media. Tuesday morning, he was seen in a neighbourhood near Jahangir's party office. He was back in the area again later in the day.

Jahangir said the officer was acting above the law. "He threatened my colleagues and my family. Is this the duty of a police observer? There is no EC rule that says a police observer can go and threaten people at their houses."

A local, Monalisa Patra Das, has lodged a complaint against Sharma for allegedly intimidating women.

BJP's Debjit Sarkar said EC would decide if Sharma's actions were right or wrong. Poll panel officials, though, played down the incident.

(With inputs from Kaushik Pradhan and Subrata Chattoraj in Kolkata)

Will not act now: HC

The Calcutta high court on Tuesday refused to restrain police observer Ajay Pal Sharma from acting in South 24 Parganas over allegations of issuing "threats" and "acting beyond his limits". The HC observed that no action would be taken against any officer on election duty until April 29. Despite multiple mentions, Justice Krishna Rao refused the plea, stating: "I am indicating I will not pass any order with regards to any officer who is on election duty till April 29." TNN

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J'khand police on high alert along Bengal border ahead of final phase of polls

Sanjay Sahay | TNN

Ranchi: Ahead of the final phase of voting in West Bengal on Wednesday, Jharkhand police is on high alert along the border areas. Around 55 composite check-posts are active in the 10 districts that share border with West Bengal.

Inspector general (IG operations) Narendra Kumar Singh said, "Ahead of the next phase of elections, the main target is preventing movement of cash, liquor, other types of freebees and anti-social elements." The 10 border districts are Sahibganj, Pakur, Dumka, Jamtara, Dhanbad, Bokaro, Ramgarh, Ranchi, Seraikela-Kharsawan and East Singhbhum.

Jharkhand Police officers said assembly polling got over in the constituencies adjacent to the Jharkhand border in the first phase itself. But police are on alert for the second phase to curb any irregularities.

"Regular checking of vehicles and people are underway as per protocol," a senior police officer said.

Police said, along with each check-post set up on the Jharkhand border, a corresponding mirror check-post has been established on the West Bengal side.

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Vikas ki Gati Apaar-Double Engine Sarkar

Information and Public Relations Department, U.P. | live telecast DD NEWS & Youtube.com/DDNEWS

Women voting in large numbers to teach oppn parties a lesson: Modi

Rajeev.Dikshit
@timesofindia.com

Varanasi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said here Tuesday that women came out in large numbers to vote in the assembly elections in five states/UTs to teach a lesson to "pariwarvaadi" (dynastic) opposition parties, which were against the entry of more women into legislative bodies.

Addressing an all-woman convention, 'Nari Shakti Vandan', in his parliamentary constituency, he said: "We have seen in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu that sisters have cast record votes. The parties opposing women's reservation have no idea that this vote of the sisters was to punish these anti-women parties."

The PM assured women that he will leave no stone unturned to ensure that their right to reservation in legislative bodies is implemented, as he slammed the opposition parties for joining hands to defeat the Constitution amendment bill on women's reservation. Parties rooted in dynastic politics feared losing their grip on power if more women from the grassroots entered electoral politics, he said, adding: "Parties doing politics of 'pariwarvaad' and appeasement consider the rise of women in law-making bodies in greater numbers as the biggest threat to their existence."

Citing the construction of the new Parliament building as a proof of his govt's intention "to fulfil our commitment" on giving 33% quota to women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies, Modi said, "The first bill we tabled in the new Parliament building was also the same, and it was passed. When the time came to execute that, family-centric parties like Congress, SP, TMC and DMK, "like the past 40 years", came together to prevent women from emerging as decision-makers. Women are the keys in making a family, society and country, but they are still told, 'What will you do? You sit silently, you will not be able to do, what is the need," he said.

AFP
PM Narendra Modi waves to supporters in Varanasi, Tuesday

Women across the country faced this situation, he said, maintaining that he had worked hard since 2014 to ensure the govt provides every possible support in their progress, as their role is key in achieving the dream of a developed India by 2047.

PM Modi, who moved in an open vehicle in lanes created between seating galleries, chanted "har har Mahadev", and also invoked Goddesses Shringar Gauri, Annapurna, Vishalakshi, Sankatha and Ganga.

DIGEST

Exit poll on Times Network

As voting in this round of assembly elections heads for its conclusion today, Times Times Now and Times Now Navbharat will partner with JVC for an exit poll of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam, and Puducherry. The four-hour broadcast will begin at 5pm on Times Now and at 4pm on Times Now Navbharat. The exit poll will present projections of the state election results, accompanied by comment and analysis. The coverage will be supported by an extensive panel of voices from across the political and analytical spectrum, including noted psephologists, senior journalists, and party representatives. On-ground insights will be integrated with real-time analysis and diverse viewpoints to give viewers insights into the people's mandate, which will be known on May 4.

2 ADMs shunted from poll duty

The EC Tuesday removed additional district magistrate (ADM) South 24 Parganas Bhaskar Pal and ADM Birbhum Souvik Bhattacharya from all election-related duties. The commission did not specify the reason behind the move, but sources said the action followed allegations of bias and dereliction of duty. Birbhum went to polls in the first phase on April 23, while South 24 Parganas is scheduled to vote on Wednesday.

Avoid preventive detentions unless essential, lawful: HC

Subrata Chattoraj & Srishti Lakhotia | TNN

Kolkata: Calcutta HC cautioned EC against preventive detention and arrests ahead before final-phase polling in Bengal, underscoring that any curbs on fundamental right to liberty must follow due process.

Disposing of a writ petition over pre-poll detentions of Trinamool Congress workers, a bench of Justices Arijit Banerjee and Partha Sarathi Sen said Tuesday it expected EC to act "fairly, efficiently, impartially, without any bias, political or otherwise, and strictly in accordance with law". HC stressed primacy of Article 21, adding personal liberty can be curtailed only through lawful procedure. TMC MP and senior lawyer Kalyan Banerjee said in his petition that an earlier order staying EC's April 21 internal memo on preventive detentions was being flouted. He alleged random arrests of party workers and councillors and claimed police targeted supporters in CM Mamata Banerjee's Bhowanipore constituency in south Kolkata, where BJP's Suvendu Adhikari is her main opponent. The MP alleged police misbehaved with him when he questioned their action and said he feared arrest. Banerjee said EC issued another memo on April 27 justifying arrests despite HC's stay. The document directed officers to act against "troublemakers", including arrests. EC's counsel Jishnu Chowdhury said there was no violation of court's interim order and cited numerous complaints of intimidation received by chief electoral officer and police. He said the April 27 notification had been withdrawn and sought disposal of the plea.

Advocate general Kishore Datta urged EC to record an undertaking that no similar directions on preventive detention would be issued before polling, while affirming authorities could act against those committing offences or with criminal history.

HC refrained from a formal order but reiterated expectation that EC and its officials, including observers, would discharge duties "fairly, impartially... and strictly in accordance with law".

TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026

S KOREA SURPASSES UK TO BE WORLD'S 8TH LARGEST STOCK MARKET

South Korea has leapfrogged the UK to become the world's eighth-biggest stock market, fueled by rally in its artificial intelligence-linked tech champions. The total market capitalisation of Korean-listed companies has surged more than 45% this year, while the UK's has gone up 3%

The size of the **UK market was about double that of South Korea's** as recently as the end of 2024

Source: Bloomberg

Two memory-chip behemoths — Samsung Electronics and SK Hynix — account for **more than 40% of Kospi index's total market-cap,** which has more than 800 constituents

Sigenergy plans up to $200mn India mfg push

Chennai: Sigenergy, the Shanghai-based energy storage systems and solar solutions maker, is planning to invest $150mn-$200mn to establish a large-scale manufacturing facility in India, as it seeks to tap into the country's rapidly expanding renewable energy and battery storage market. The company, which commenced its Indian operations a few months ago, is evaluating suitable locations, state-level incentives and policy support across several states, including Maharashtra, where its India arm is headquartered, as well as Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Tamil Nadu. It aims to build a 10–20 GW capacity unit to manufacture batteries and inverters. — **G Balachandar**

Snabbit raises $56mn, co valued at $390mn

Bengaluru: Snabbit has raised $56 million as it looks to consolidate its position in India's fast-growing on-demand home services market. The round was co-led by Susquehanna Venture Capital, Mirae Asset Venture Investments, and Bertelsmann India Investments. The funding values the startup at about $390 million, sources told **TOI**. Founder and CEO Aayush Agarwal declined to comment on the valuation. TNN

SAP bets on 'autonomous enterprise' for AI era: Klein

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Bengaluru: German software major SAP CEO **Christian Klein** outlined a new strategy for an AI-first world, calling it the "autonomous enterprise." He stressed that while AI is transformative, it will not replace enterprise software.

"We're introducing our vision of the autonomous enterprise to redefine how businesses will run in the age of AI," Klein said in an email to employees. "Our goal is to help customers operate smarter, respond faster, and free up capacity for higher-value work using AI assistants and agents that manage end-to-end processes across domains in a connected, real-time system." At the core of this vision is the SAP Business AI Platform (BAIP), which integrates process knowledge, enterprise data, and governance into AI agents. Klein said this builds on SAP's ERP foundation, embedding business context into AI-driven decision-making.

Positioning SAP against competitors, he said the company is building an integrated architecture for enterprise-wide autonomy, spanning areas such as finance, supply chain, human capital management, and customer experience. "These agents will go beyond task automation and act as intelligent co-workers—connecting processes, data, and decisions across the enterprise," he said. Klein also called for internal alignment to execute the shift. "Shift development focus from standalone apps to agents and a shared enterprise-grade AI context," he said, urging teams to work closely with customers.

Govt revives strategic sale of IDBI Bank after bid scrapping

Explores Other Valuation Methods, Quick Disinvestment

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Centre has revived the strategic sale of its stake in IDBI Bank, along with LIC's stake a month after the two bids were rejected as they were way below the reserve price.

Persons familiar with the discussions said a fresh valuation exercise is being undertaken, given that the bank has a small free float, making price discovery through that route difficult. At the same time, officials will examine whether the sale process should be limited to the existing set of bidders or the process should be undertaken afresh, although the idea is to expedite the exercise to ensure that global investors retain trust and govt also raises resources to meet its ambitious funding requirements for investment and schemes.

Retaining the pool to players, who had bid, may open up the possibility of litigation, an official cautioned. At the same time, there is recognition in govt that the abandoned sale process was too long – lasting five years. And, keeping a shorter timeline is critical in whatever shape the process is revived . Besides, feedback from bidders is seen to be key as some of the interested players, such as Kotak Mahindra, dropped out due to high pension burden that was coming with the bank.

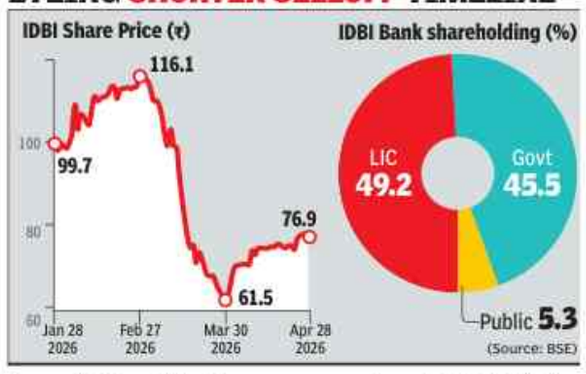
Similarly, govt's continuation as a stakeholder is another concern flagged by some of the bankers, who argued that many feared that the Centre may drive the operations in a way that it served its interest and the new owner may not get a completely free hand. "If the govt is really serious about privatisation it should not have any remaining shares," said an executive with one of the entities that was interested in acquiring the bank.

The Centre holds a 45.5% stake in IDBI Bank, while LIC is the largest shareholder with 49.2% holding.

The exact details of the process is expected to be firmed up in the coming months, but with the Centre chasing an ambitious disinvestment and asset monetisation target of Rs 80,000 crore in the current fiscal year, merely depending on InvITs by NHAI may not help govt.

IDBI Bank shares have recovered in recent days after FM Nirmala Sitharaman said that govt will divest its stake in the entity and closed at Rs 76.9 on BSE on Tuesday.

EYEING SHORTER SELLOFF TIMELINE



Industrial growth slows to 5-mth low in March

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Industrial production growth moderated to a five-month low of 4.1% in March on back of the West Asia conflict.

The growth was 3.9% a year ago and a little slower than the 5.1% growth registered in Feb.

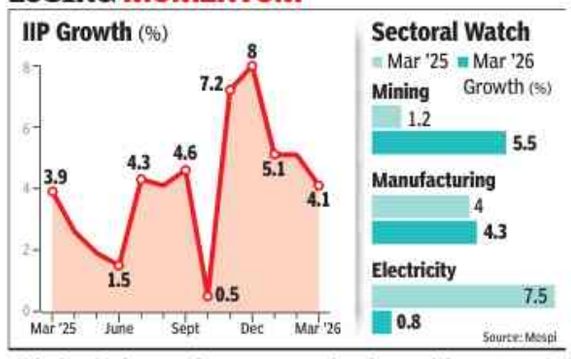
Data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Tuesday estimated that manufacturing sector, which accounts for nearly a fourth of the index, grew 4.2% in March, compared with 4% a year ago and 5.9% in Feb.

Within the manufacturing sector, 9 out of 23 industry groups, including apparel, textiles, tobacco, beverages, leather and chemicals saw a decline in the output in March. "The export market was also down, which was partly responsible for the low performance (in these sectors)," Bank of Baroda chief economist Madan Sabnavis said.

Industries manufacturing transport equipment (20.8%), motor vehicles (18.1%), machinery (11.2%) and metal products (8.4%) saw robust growth in March. Meanwhile, output in the electricity sector (0.8%) also decelerated from 2.3% in Feb, while the mining sector (5.5%) output accelerated in March.

Dipti Deshpande, principal economist, Crisil said the March data captures only a part of the shock due to West Asian conflict, as uncertainty and weak producer sentiment are yet to fully manifest in the production data.

LOSING MOMENTUM



Maruti profit slips 6.4% in Q4, revenue jumps 29%

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki had a record year in 2025-26 in terms of revenue and sales, but rising costs took a bite out of profits.

The automaker posted consolidated revenue of over Rs 1.8 lakh crore, up 19.9% from the previous year, with total sales of 24.2 lakh vehicles. Net profit, however, barely moved — rising 1.2% to Rs 14,680 crore — as higher material, employee and depreciation costs ate into margins.

The March quarter told a similar story: Revenue jumped 28.6% to Rs 52,462 crore, but net profit slipped 6.4% to Rs 3,659 crore.

R C Bhargava, chairman, Maruti Suzuki India, said the auto industry is back in a growth phase, helped by stronger consumer demand and govt support, including lower taxes on small cars. He said Maruti expects to roll out about 2.5 lakh more vehicles this year as supply bottlenecks ease and new capacity comes online.

The bigger constraint right now, he said, is not whether people want to buy cars but how many the company can actually make. Maruti is adding new production lines that will bring roughly 5 lakh additional units of annual capacity this year and is simultaneously building two new plants, each capable of producing one million units a year, Bhargava said. "That kind of expansion is rare even by global standards," he added. The company announced capex of Rs 14,000 crore for the current fiscal year.

Eternal targets $20bn order value as Blinkit drives growth

Bengaluru: Eternal, formerly Zomato, expects to double its annual net order value (NOV) to $20 billion in less than two years, driven by the continued expansion of its quick commerce business, Blinkit.

The company said it took 18 years to reach $10 billion in NOV across Zomato, Blinkit, and District. Founder Deepinder Goyal, in a shareholder letter, said the next doubling "will take less than two years from here." NOV refers to total order value, excluding returns and discounts. Eternal's revenue for the March quarter rose to Rs 17,634 crore, up about 6% sequentially from Rs 16,663 crore in the Dec quarter and significantly higher than Rs 6,201 crore a year ago, marking a 184% year-on-year increase. Net profit stood at Rs 174 crore, up 71% quarter-on-quarter from Rs 102 crore and more than four times the Rs 39 crore reported a year earlier.

For the full year, revenue rose to Rs 55,760 crore from Rs 21,320 crore in FY25, a growth of around 162%. However, annual profit declined to Rs 366 crore from Rs 527 crore in the previous year, down about 31%. Blinkit remained the key growth engine. Quick commerce NOV grew 95.4% year-on-year in the March quarter, with 216 net new stores added, taking the total to 2,243. On the earnings call, management said growth will be driven by assortment expansion, geographic expansion, and demand densification. TNN

Cognitive arbitrage reshapes IT firms' economics: D'Souza

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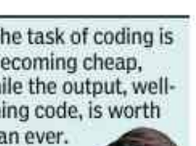
Bengaluru: Code and coding are no longer moving in tandem—and this gap lies at the heart of AI's disruption of the software services industry. "Today, we are seeing something similar—what you could call cognitive arbitrage—where labour is increasingly being replaced by machines," former Cognizant CEO Francisco D'Souza told TOI in a recent interaction.

D'Souza founded tech investment firm Recognize a few years ago and raised $1.7 billion for its second fund, just four years after closing its $1.3 billion debut. The firm focuses on companies valued between $50 million and $500 million, leveraging a partnership-driven model to accelerate growth.

In his white paper, he describes this shift as the "great decoupling," where the value of code is rising sharply even as the act of coding becomes increasingly commoditised. This creates a striking paradox. On one hand, the value of code has never been higher—evident in the extraordinary valuations of companies like OpenAI and Anthropic, driven largely by software. On the other, the value of coding—the act of writing code—is trending towards zero, as machines generate code at near-zero marginal cost. "The task of coding is becoming cheap, even while the output, well-functioning code, is worth more than ever. I call this the paradox of value," he wrote.

> The task of coding is becoming cheap, even while the output, well-functioning code, is worth more than ever. I call this the paradox of value
> **Francisco D'Souza**
> COFOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER, RECOGNIZE



However, abundant code does not equal reliable software. "More code increases complexity, risk, and accountability challenges," he said, arguing that firms must rethink commercial models. "Input pricing is time-and-materials. Output pricing could be charged per member per month. The industry has tried outcome pricing before, but it's hard to measure and attribute. Output pricing is a good middle ground—it lets you capture productivity gains while aligning with customer value."

Capturing this shift will require firms to move beyond legacy metrics and rethink how they create and deliver value. It also demands a different workforce. Upstream roles include value orchestrators, who align builds with business strategy; enterprise architects, who ensure integration with complex systems; and intent curators, who translate business needs into precise AI-executable specifications.

Downstream roles like, results orchestrators ensure AI-generated components come together into reliable outcomes; ethics stewards embed safety and guardrails; and accountability stewards own the output, bridging the "certainty gap" when things go wrong.

This transition, D'Souza said, will come with a J-curve effect. "In the short term, productivity gains from AI will reduce the need for certain types of work, creating deflationary pressure. But over time, new types of work will emerge—driven by increased technology adoption and new market opportunities."

UAE to leave Opec amid energy crisis

Policy Decision Based On Production Levels; Didn't Consult Saudi Arabia: Energy Minister

Dubai: The United Arab Emirates said on Tuesday it was quitting Opec and Opec+, dealing a heavy blow to the oil producers' group as an unprecedented energy crisis triggered by the Iran war exposes discord among Gulf nations.

The loss of UAE, a longstanding Opec member, could weaken the group, which has usually sought to show a united front despite internal disagreements over geopolitics and production quotas.

UAE energy minister Suhail Mohamed al-Mazrouei said the decision was taken after a careful look at the regional power's energy strategies. Asked whether the UAE consulted with Opec's de facto leader and regional heavyweight Saudi Arabia, he said the UAE did not raise the issue with any other country.

"This is a policy decision, it has been done after a careful look at current and future policies related to level of production," said the energy minister.

Opec Gulf producers have been struggling to ship exports through the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint between Iran and Oman through which a fifth of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas normally passes, because of Iranian threats and attacks against vessels.

Mazrouei said the UAE's move, in which it will leave Opec and Opec+ as of May 1, would not have a huge impact on the market because of the constraints in the strait.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) and allies including Russia are known collectively as Opec+, and the UAE was their fourth-largest producer. Together they controlled nearly half the world's oil before the war.

The International Energy Agency said that Opec+ saw its share of global oil output decline to 44% in March from about 48% in Feb. It is likely to fall further in April as production shut-ins become more pronounced.

"This opens the door for the UAE to gain global market share when the geopolitical situation normalises," said Monica Malik, chief economist at ADCB. Operating outside the producer group allows the UAE to fully leverage its position as a supplier of some of the world's lowest-cost and lowest-carbon barrels.

The UAE has recently doubled down on its relationships with the United States and Israel, especially after coming under attack during the Iran war. REUTERS

DENT TO CARTEL'S UNITY

What is Opec
- Founded in 1960, it has 12 major oil producing countries — Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, UAE, Kuwait, Venezuela, Nigeria, Algeria, Angola, Libya, Congo, Gabon
- The cartel of oil producers manages oil production, dictates global oil prices to maximise gains for the members

What is Opec+
Founded in 2016 in the aftermath of oil price crash, it is an expanded alliance constituting of Opec members and other non-Opec major oil producing countries — Russia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Oman, Azerbaijan

WHAT DOES UAE'S EXIT MEAN

Weakens the unity of the cartel that has controlled oil prices for the past 6 decades	UAE can now freely raise production, leading to possible downward pressure on oil prices	Expands rivalry with Saudi Arabia, which has advocated strict production quotas

UAE exit news trims oil price gains

Brent crude futures for June climbed 3.1%, to $111.6 a barrel, posting gains for a seventh straight day after gaining 2.8% to close the previous session at their highest since April 7. US WTI crude for June rose 3.7%, to $100.1 a barrel, after gaining 2.1% in the previous session. WTI futures rose above the $100 per barrel threshold for the first time since April 13.

Prices pared some gains after UAE said it had quit Opec and Opec+, dealing a heavy blow to the oil exporting groups. REUTERS

SCI may run vessels to W Asia to help exporters

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New Delhi: Govt has indicated to exporters that Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) may run container ships to West Asia to help them tide over the problem of high freight costs.

Responding to complaints over high input and freight costs, commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal is said to have conveyed SCI's plan during a meeting with export promotion councils on Tuesday evening, an industry representative present in the meeting told **TOI**. Earlier this month, **TOI** had first reported about the discussions that also involves Apeda and Concor.

Freight and input cost and availability of container ships due to West Asia conflict were the two most prominent concerns shared at the meeting, with oil prices, petrochemicals, chemicals, plastics and cotton being flagged as segments, where govt intervention was sought. The textiles bodies, for instance, have demanded zero duty import of cotton, citing high market prices although in this case, the war in West Asia is strictly not the villain.

An exporter alleged that Cotton Corporation of India liquidated stocks, which were picked up by a handful of players, who had jacked up prices and zero-duty imports could help offset that impact. The leather industry also has sought some concessions related to polyutherine.

There were also suggestions to streamline some of the relief measures announced by govt. The commerce department has already stepped in to announce a wider insurance coverage for goods headed to West Asia, while the revenue department has eased norms for SEZ units selling in the domestic market.

At Tuesday's meeting, exporters also raised issues related to compliance costs, testing requirements and challenges faced by MSMEs in entering export markets. While promising all govt support, Goyal urged exporters and industry bodies to fully leverage India's trade agreements with developed economies to expand market access, boost exports and create employment opportunities, noting that timely utilisation of these agreements is critical. Against goods exports of $860 billion, minister said it should act as a springboard to achieve $2 trillion exports by 2030.

Goyal on Tuesday also announced a three-year waiver of application fee for intellectual property rights, such as patents, trademarks, and designs, related to the sports sector.

'EXPAND MKT ACCESS'

- Commerce and industry minister **Piyush Goyal** has urged exporters and industry bodies to fully leverage India's trade agreements with developed economies to expand market access, boost exports and create employment opportunities
- Timely utilisation of these agreements is critical, he says

Rising fuel costs strain airline viability: FIA

▶ Continued from page 1

To ensure uninterrupted operations of airlines within India, FIA requests urgent intervention to review the ATF cost challenges," the lobby group said, while arguing that fuel prices were making airline networks unviable and unsustainable.

ATF accounted for 30-40% of airlines' cost earlier and the band increased to 55-60% after hike in April, "creating completely inoperable conditions". A weaker rupee had added to cost woes.

"Airlines are in a very difficult, precarious and challenging situation. Airlines have been somehow managing operations till date, despite rising cost and additional operation expenses due to airspace closure… In order to survive, sustain and continue operation, we request your urgent intervention for immediate and meaningful financial support to tide over the current situation," the FIA letter added.

"There is a (price) control mechanism for other fuels like diesel and petrol, which is missing for ATF and the price of ATF is significantly high as compared to its production cost. ATF is just 4% of (India's) refinery production. Of the 4% ATF produced in India, only 30% of ATF is consumed by its domestic airlines and 20% by international carriers and surplus of 50% on ATF is being exported," it adds. High ATF prices "will result in unsurmountable losses for airline and lead to grounding of aircraft resulting in cancellation of flights."

Peak XV Partners exits MobiKwik in ₹130 crore block deal

Mumbai: Peak XV Partners sold its remaining 7.7% stake in fintech MobiKwik through block deals worth over Rs 130 crore on Tuesday, completely exiting its investment in the firm, said people in the know. The floor price of the deal was set at Rs 214 per share, about 5% discount to the company's closing price on NSE on Monday. Florintree Advisors, Viridian Asset Management, Dymon Asia and Karma Capital were among the buyers, sources said. TNN

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At SCO meet, Rajnath warns Pak on 'state-sponsored terror'

'Op Sindoor Shows India's Firm Resolve'

Surendra.Singh
@timesofindia.com

Rajnath Singh pays tribute at Victory Square in Kyrgyzstan, Tuesday

Addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) defence ministers' meeting in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek on Tuesday, defence minister Rajnath Singh said "Operation Sindoor had demonstrated India's firm resolve that terror epicentres will be meted out justifiable punishment". His warning to Pakistan came before its defence minister Khawaja Asif at the meet.

Rajnath stressed the need for a "united front to tackle evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism by dismantling safe havens and rejecting any political exceptions". He called on member-states to eliminate double standards in the global fight against terror. "We must not lose sight of state-sponsored cross-border terror which attacks the very sovereignty of a nation state." Recalling Pahalgam, he said, "No grievance, real or supposed, can become an excuse for terror and humanitarian loss".

On the global situation, he said, "The real crisis today is not of a non-existent order but a tendency to question the established rules-based world order. We must focus on a global consensus where co-existence, cohabitation and compassion take precedence over chaos, competition and conflict...We should not allow it to become an era of violence and war, but an era of peace and prosperity."

Singh discusses West Asia with China minister

Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday held a meeting with his Chinese counterpart Admiral Dong Jun on the sidelines of the SCO defence ministers' meeting in Bishkek, reports **Surendra Singh**. During the discussions, the ministers shared views on the regional and global security landscape, in particular the developments in West Asia, the defence ministry said. The meeting came amid India and China's continuing efforts to rebuild ties after the LAC standoff in 2020. Both sides have initiated a series of measures in the last few months to reset their ties.

ED attaches flat, farmhouse of Anil Ambani

New Delhi: In fresh action against Anil Ambani and his Reliance group entities, ED on Tuesday said it has attached his family properties worth another Rs 3,035 crore, including a flat in Usha Kiran building in Mumbai and a farmhouse in Khandala (Pune), taking attachments to nearly Rs 20,000 crore in the ongoing money laundering case.

The latest attachments have been made as part of ED's investigation against Reliance Communications (RCom), which, the agency said, has defaulted over Rs 40,000 crore of bank loans, siphoning off public funds.

"The provisional attachment under PMLA has been made to prevent dissipation of assets and to protect interests of banks and public," ED said.

The agency said a land in Sanand, Ahmedabad, in the name of Mudra Foundation for Communications Research and Education (MICA), has been attached. TNN

Honeymoon murder case: Court grants bail to Sonam

Shillong: A Shillong court has granted bail to Sonam Raghuvanshi, the prime accused in the murder of her husband Raja Raghuvanshi during their honeymoon trip to Cherrapunjee's Sohra on May 23, 2025, citing police's failure to communicate to her the grounds of her arrest, report **Manosh Das and Sagar Choukse**.

Additional DC (Judicial) Dashalene R Kharbteng granted relief on a bail bond of Rs 50,000 along with a surety of the same amount. However, the court ordered Sonam Raghuvanshi to remain in Shillong and appear before it during hearings.

Soon after the court order, the victim's family announced plans to move a higher court seeking cancellation of the bail. It was Sonam's fourth appeal for bail.

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No.: KRDCL/MD/APA/2026-27/285 Date: 28/04/2026

NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR EMPANELMENT OF ADVOCATES

KRDCL invites applications from eligible Advocates for empanelment to represent the Corporation before the **Supreme Court, High Court of Karnataka (all benches), CAT/KSAT, Arbitration Tribunals, Civil & Commercial Courts, District Courts, Consumer Forums, and other Courts/Tribunals across Karnataka**. Preference will be given to experienced local Advocates.

1. Qualification: • Law Degree from a UGC-recognized University (LL.M. preferred). • Enrollment with Bar Council

2. Experience: • Supreme Court/High Court: Minimum 20 years experience in the relevant field (Land acquisition, Tender, Civil & Commercial , Labour, Service, Local Body, Tax, etc.) before the Supreme Court/ High Court. • CAT/KSAT (Service matters): Minimum 15 years Service matters as a practicing Advocate. • Arbitration matters: Minimum 20 years (commercial and construction disputes preferred). • District/Civil Courts: Minimum 15 years (civil, land, commercial matters). • Other Courts/Tribunals: Minimum 5 years

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Sd/- Managing Director
KRDCL, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/YC/397/2026-27

Woman, 3 sons get death in murder case

Agra: A court in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar Tuesday sentenced four members of a family — three brothers, in their 30s, and their 60-year-old mother — to death for murdering a 49-year-old man over debt repayment at Bhorakalan's Sisauli area in 2019, reports **Mohammad Dilshad**.

Describing the crime as "rarest of rare" , the court observed: "Human life is a precious gift, and every individual has an equal right to live... In the present case, convicts committed a brutal murder for money, and therefore, awarding the death penalty is the only appropriate course."

On June 17 that year, victim Shekhar Chaudhary from a farming family had gone to Kheri Sudiyan to recover Rs 70,000 he had loaned Ramkumar from the neighbouring village. But Ramkumar along with his sons Pradeep Kumar, 38, Sandeep Kumar, 36, and Sonu Kumar, 30, and his wife Mukesh Devi, 60, attacked Shekhar with sticks. They stoned him to death.

Mumbai attack: References to IS found in seized material

▶ Continued from page 1

An officials said a few references to the Islamic State were found in the material seized, and also a written letter which made a mention of such an attack and reflected a radicalized mind. The official said ATS has sealed the home and is analysing the material seized. The attack took place at an under-construction site barely 200 m away from the building in which Ansari lives.

In the FIR, Sen stated that at 3 am on Monday, Ansari first came up to him as he was guarding the front of the site and asked for the address of a local mosque. When he told Ansari the address, Ansari asked him if he knew the name of the mosque. As the guard said "no," Ansari asked him, "Are you a Hindu?" The guard replied in the affirmative, and Ansari left. He returned around 4.30 am, Sen said, and, stating "You are a Hindu, correct?" held the guard's right hand and pulled out a knife to stab him. Sen said he tried to evade the attack and got stabbed in the back.

Sen told the police that he somehow escaped the attacker's grip and ran into the supervisor guard Mishra's cabin, but Ansari followed him there. "He asked Mishra, 'Tu bhi Hindu hain na?' ('You too are a Hindu, aren't you?') and then asked him to recite the 'kalma', and when Mishra couldn't recite it, stabbed him in the stomach," Sen stated in the FIR.

Ansari was identified with the help of CCTV footage and caught within one hour of the attack by local police.

Local residents helped the two guards reach the local hospital. One of the residents, who did not wish to be named, said, "The guards were terrified and were asking for help. We took them immediately to the cops and then to hospital."

Police said Ansari had completed his graduation in biology while he was in US with his parents. His parents continue to stay in the US. He was married to a US citizen of Indian origin but had been divorced. He used to conduct online maths, chemistry and English classes for students based in Abu Dhabi, police said.

A staffer at the Mira Road society where he lived said he hardly saw Ansari as he never opened the door and "sometimes his garbage would be kept outside." A 'lone wolf attack' refers to a terrorist act carried out by an individual without any help from an organisation.

Terrorists who targeted tourists in Pahalgam in April 2025 had allegedly asked one of the victims to recite the 'kalma' before shooting him dead.

J&K court acquits woman, 'partner' in hubby's murder

Srinagar: A J&K Bandipora court on Monday acquitted a woman and her alleged partner of the charges of murdering her husband in 2016. It had cited the lack of irrefutable evidence against the accused as grounds for the acquittal, reports **Naseer Ganai**.

District and sessions judge Mir Wajahat faulted the prosecution for failing to produce a crucial forensic report that could have resolved the ambiguity regarding the cause of death — natural or murder. "Courts do not convict on possibility; they convict on proof. Possibility is the domain of suspicion; proof is the mandate of law ... The law demands proof; and where proof fails, the court must speak in one voice of acquittal," the judge observed.

Will mitigate scam calls: WhatsApp

▶ Continued from page 1

On the discussion with the social media major, the status report said, "WhatsApp will continue strengthening AI/ML-based systems to detect impersonation of law enforcement agencies, misuse of official logos."

"WhatsApp informed that detection models and warning mechanisms have been introduced to identify impersonation patterns and alert users in suspicious interactions," the report said, adding that the popular social media platform assured to undertake additional safeguards to detect and mitigate prolonged scam calls, as seen in digital arrest cases, and submit proposed technical measures within a month.

"WhatsApp further ensured to cooperate with Law Enforcement Agencies and I4C, including timely action on shared signals related to scam networks, impersonation of law enforcement agencies, and fraudulent activities conducted through the platform," it said.

The status report detailed a series of steps under implementation – biometric identity verification prior to issuance of SIM cards by all telecom service providers (TSPs) and national database on SIM card holders of all TSPs.

"DoT, in coordination with TSPs, to ensure that the technical system for national-level visibility of SIM issuance across operators is implemented within six months thereafter, so that the BIVS (Biometric Idenity Verification System)-based cross-operator SIM monitoring system becomes operational within a total period of nine months, before December 2026," it said.

In an important step to stop fake telemarketers and cybercriminals from using multiple SIMs, the Centre told the SC that TSPs have been asked to "develop mechanisms to prevent misuse of multiple PoS (Point of Sale) identities by the same individual."

SC: No proof to prove accused's culpability

▶ Continued from page 1

Supreme Court began its verdict by saying "an inept investigation or a scripted enquiry, both are fatal to criminal prosecution but the latter has lethal consequences when there is a possibility of totally innocent persons being crucified".

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and K Vinod Chandran accepted advocate Talha Abdul Rahman's petition, which pointed out various loopholes in the prosecution's story. The court said there was no sufficient proof to prove culpability of the accused in the case and set aside the orders of the trial court as well as the Gauhati high court of conviction and sentence.

It asked Assam govt to take steps to give proper training to its police force.

"It is unfortunate that the police officer who reached the spot immediately after the incident took place, on the basis of an information over telephone, failed to follow due procedure to put the criminal investigation in motion as per the CrPC," the bench said. "Be it ignorance, inefficiency or malicious motivation, the crime is left unresolved, and considerable time and money has been spent in the prosecution of 16 persons, some of whom died during trial and the others suffered incarceration for long periods," it said.

The state and its home department "would do well to better equip their officers in investigating crimes and educating them of due procedure", the bench said.

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IN THE COURT OF THE XXXI ADDL. CITY CIVIL JUDGE AT BANGALORE (CCH No.14)
O.S. No. 2945 / 2025

BETWEEN : Sri. B.M. Prasad, S/o Sri. B.N. Manjunatha Gupta, Aged about 42 Years, Residing at #749, 15th Main, 17th Cross, BSK 2nd Stage, Bangalore - 560 079. ...PLAINTIFF

AND : Sri. Jagadish Singh & Another

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT NO.1 UNDER ORDER 5 RULE 20 OF CPC

Sri. Jagadish Singh, S/o Late Sri. R.R.Singh, Aged about 70 Years, Residing at #28, 20th 'H' Cross, Ejipura, Viveknagar Post, Bangalore - 560 047. ...DEFENDANT

Whereas the Plaintiff above named has instituted a Suit against you seeking relief of Declaration / Injunction and other consequential relief/s in respect of Schedule property mentioned below.

You are hereby summoned to appear before this Hon'ble Court in person or through an advocate duly instructed **on 18/6/2026 at 11-00 a.m.** in the forenoon before the Addl. City civil and sessions judge (CCH 14) at Bangalore.

Take notice that, in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the matter will be heard and determined in your absence.

SCHEDULE - A PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing No.26, situated at 1st Main, Vinayaka Layout, 3rd Stage, Vijayanagar West, BBMP Ward No.35, formed in bearing Sy. Nos.367/1, 2, 3, 3-372/1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 373-1, 2, 3, 374/2 & 384/1 of Kempapura Agrahara Village, Bangalore measuring East to West 80 Feet, or 24.39 Meters and North to South 50 Feet or 15.24 Meters, in all measuring 4000 Sq. Feet or 371.74 Meters and bounded on :- East by : Road, West by : Site No.61 & 62, North by : Site No.25, South by : Site No.27

SCHEDULE - B PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing No.26 situated at 1st Main, Vinayaka layout 3rd stage, Vijayanagara West, BBMP Ward No.35 a two bedrooms residential apartment/flat bearing Flat No. F-2, situated at First Floor of the multistoried residential apartment/ building known as "Sumukha Residency" having super built-up area of 1120 Sq. Ft., with 360 Sq. Ft. of undivided share in all that piece and parcel of the land described in the Schedule 'A' property mentioned hereunder along with two covered car parking areas in the basement with Water, Electricity and sewerage amenities together with common areas such as passages, lobbies, lift, staircase and other area of common use etc.

Details of the property:

1.	Super Built-up area	: 1120 Sq. Ft.
2.	Undivided share	: 360 Sq. Ft or equaling
3.	Walls	: Solid cement blocks
4.	Flooring	: Granite
5.	Ceiling	: RCC
6.	Doors	: Main Door and Pooja with Teak, other doors with Sal-wood frames and flush doors.
7.	Windows	: Frames with Sal Wood
8.	Floor	: First Floor
9.	Amenities	: Electricity, Water & Sanitary
10.	Car parking	: Two coveneor car parking area in the Basement

Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 15th day of April, 2026 at Bangalore.

By Order of Court, SENIOR SHERISTEDAR, CITY CIVIL COURT, BANGALORE.

Advocate for Plaintiff
M. SHIVAPRAKASH, AMARNATHA. R
JV. MANJUNATH, Advocate
No.105, 1st Floor, 3rd Cross, Gandhinagar, Bangalore - 560 009.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that our Client/s intend to purchase the below mentioned Schedule Properties from its respective owners of the survey numbers all situated at Kalkunte Agrahara village, Anugondanahalli Hobli, Hoskote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District.

The Owners, namely **Ramachandrappa. A. N and Krishna Murthy. A. N** have represented that they are the absolute owners of their respective survey numbers mentioned under the Schedule Properties and are in lawful possession of the same. Further they represent, jointly and severally, that the Schedule Properties are free from any kind of encumbrance, suits, litigation proceedings under any statute. Any person or persons asserting any right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever in the Schedule Properties or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, gift, inheritance, bequest, possession, pending litigation, maintenance, easement, memorandum of understanding, agreement, power of attorney, option, right of first refusal, pre-emption or otherwise whatsoever is hereby required to notify the same in writing to the undersigned within a period of 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of issuance of this notice with all documentary proof thereof failing which our Client/s will treat the title of the Schedule Properties as clear and marketable and will proceed to enter into the sale transaction.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

All those pieces and parcel of agricultural lands bearing (i) Survey No. 92/1 measuring 1 acre 5 guntas, with no kharab, (ii) Survey No. 84/2 measuring 2 acres, with no kharab, (iii) Survey No. 84/1 measuring 29 guntas, with no kharab, (iv) Survey No. 81/4 measuring 19 guntas, with no kharab, and (v) Survey No. 82/2 measuring 1 acre 1 gunta, excluding ½ gunta 'B' kharab, together measuring 5 acres 14 guntas, excluding ½ gunta 'B' kharab, all are situated at Kalkunte Agrahara village, Anugondanahalli Hobli, Hoskote Taluk, Bangalore Rural District and more particularly detailed as below:

Sl. No.	Sy No.	Acres	Guntas	Kharab	Owner/s	East by	West by	North by	South by
1.	92/1	1	5	0	Ramachandrappa & Krishnamurthy both s/o Late Narayanappa (Jointly)	Sy No. 92/2	Sy No. 91/2	Sy Nos. 84/2 & 84/6	Sy No. 95
2.	84/2	2	0	0	Ramachandrappa & Krishnamurthy both s/o Late Narayanappa (Jointly)	Sy Nos. 84/1,	Sy Nos. 84/6, 84/5, 81/2,	Sy Nos. 81/4 & 84/5	Sy Nos. 92/1 & 92/2
3.	84/1	0	29	0	Ramachandrappa & Krishnamurthy both s/o late Narayanappa (Jointly)	Sy Nos. 82/2, 82/3, 82/4 & 83/2	Sy No. 84/2	Sy No. 81/5	Sy Nos. 92/2, 92/5 & 92/7
4.	81/4	0	19	0	Krishnamurthy s/o Narayanappa	Sy Nos. 81/9, 81/6, & 81/5	Sy Nos. 81/3 & 81/2	Sy No. 81/9	Sy No. 84/2
5.	82/2	1	1	½ gunta B Kharab	Ramachandrappa & Krishnamurthy both s/o late Narayanappa (Jointly)	Sy No.82/1 cart track & Yittagodi Village Boundary	Sy Nos. 81/8 & 84/1	Sy Nos. 82/1 & 81/8	Sy No. 82/3

Chandra Chooda RN
Lexiadvocates
Chandra@Lexiadvocates.com
No.12, Anu Arcade, 3rd Floor, CMH Road, Indira Nagar, Bengaluru-560008. Mobile: **9742258221,** Date: 28-04-2026

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6D - Anant Kashi Ayodhya Yatra @ ₹ 41 400.00 pp
7D - Best of Nepal with Muktinath @ ₹ 43 400.00 pp
10D - Kashi To Kathmandu Darshan Yatra @ ₹ 76 900.00 pp
7D - Sri Lanka Ramayan Anant Yatra @ ₹ 73 200.00 pp (with flights)
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14D - Kailash Mansarovar Yatra By Helicopter @ ₹ 2 56 500.00 (Group Pujas & Havan at Holy Mansarovar Lake | Free Hygiene Kit)
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2-year hunt ends, Dawood aide Dola brought back from Turkiye

Shah Lauds Op For Capture Of International Drug Kingpin

Rajshekhar.Jha
@timesofindia.com

Dola's arrest is being seen as a major blow to Dawood's narcotics network in Turkiye and Bulgaria — a critical segment of Balkan route linking Asian and South American producers to European markets

New Delhi: Central agencies and NCB secured the return of international drug trafficker and D Company henchman Mohammed Salim Dola Tuesday morning, ending a two-year-long manhunt that spanned several countries.

In an operation monitored by the home ministry, he was flown from Istanbul on a special aircraft which landed at the technical area of Delhi airport.

Union home minister Amit Shah praised the multi-agency operation. "Zero tolerance against Narco syndicates. Under the Modi govt's mission to ruthlessly smash drug cartels, our anti-narcotics agencies have extended their claws across borders through a robust network of global agencies. Now no matter where they hide, no place is safe for drug kingpins," he said in a post on X.

Dola, a key supplier of Mephedrone aka Meow Meow drug, was detained in Turkiye last week after being geolocated there in close coordination with international and Indian intelligence agencies as part of 'Operation Global-Hunt'.

His arrest is being seen as a major blow to the Dawood Ibrahim's narcotics network in Turkiye and Bulgaria — a critical segment of the Balkan route linking Asian and South American producers to European markets, sources said.

India had begun to tighten its noose around Dola two years ago after his name surfaced in an investigation of Meow Meow labs in several states. In March 2024, the Interpol had issued a Red Notice against him on India's request. The first breakthrough came last year when his son, Tahil Dola, and other associates were arrested by the Mumbai police after deportation/extradition from the UAE in coordination with CBI. The agencies subsequently intensified their efforts to zero down on Dola's location. His UAE passport made Dola more accessible to Indian agencies, sources said.

Earlier this month, the agencies zeroed down on a flat in Istanbul's Beylikduzu district where Dola was living and operating from under an assumed identity. Subsequently, a raid was conducted by the authorities resulting in his apprehension.

Wanted in multiple narcotics trafficking cases in India, Dola (59), a resident of Dongri in Mumbai, had been on the fugitive list since 2018. Officials said his role emerged as that of a bulk supplier to downstream distribution networks in India, making him a wanted subject for ATS Gujarat and the Mumbai Police."Over the years, Dola, a close aide of Dawood Ibrahim, had established a major transnational drug trafficking syndicate spanning a number of countries in the Middle East, Africa and Europe. His two-decade long criminal antecedents include direct involvement in cases involving multiple high-value seizures of Heroin, Charas, Mephedrone, Mandrax and Methamphetamine in Maharashtra and Gujarat," the NCB said.

Punjab records second attack on freight corridor this year

▶ Continued from page 1

This is the second attack on the freight corridor in Punjab this year after a blast in Jan injured a loco pilot and derailed a goods engine in Sirhind region, barely 35km from Monday's blast site.

Officers said Jagroop had been planting the IED near Bathonia village at around 9 pm when it detonated prematurely, blowing him to pieces and damaging part of the rails.

Some body parts were collected at the site at Tuesday noon, said GRP sources. Investigators seized wires, suspected explosive material, a damaged mobile phone and SIM card from the blast site.

A train ticket found among his belongings suggested Jagroop had travelled from Amritsar to Sirhind by train before making his way to the blast site. CCTV footage shows him parking a motorcycle at Amritsar station and then boarding the train. The bike has been confiscated.

ANI

A search operation is underway following a blast on a railway track, in Patiala on Tuesday

"From Sirhind, Jagroop probably travelled by bus to Rajpura or Shambu but no bus ticket was found. The blast spot is 6km from Shambu railway station and around 10km from Rajpura. The blast occurred when the goods train had just passed. The loco pilot felt a jerk," said GRP SHO Patiala Dilbagh Singh, adding that there was very little damage to the tracks.

Sources say Jagroop, who was married and has two daughters, had campaigned for Khadoor Sahib MP Amritpal Singh, currently lodged in Dibrugarh jail, Assam. Cleanshaven when he worked in Dubai, he adopted Sikh practices late in life and identified himself as a "Nihang".

"Jagroop's body was found in Nihang attire. His links with his brother Satnam were detected through call data recovered from his SIM card, technical evidence and interrogation. Three of four arrested were booked in the past for serious crimes. The funds trail is being investigated," said SSP Varun Sharma.

The other suspects were identified as Mansa residents Pardeep Singh Khalsa and Kulwinder Singh, alias Bagga, and Tarn Taran's Gurpreet Singh, alias Gopi.

DIG (Patiala range) Kuldeep Singh Chahal and SSP Sharma said Pardeep was the module's kingpin and that he was in close contact with a Malaysia-based pro-Khalistan terrorist as well as Pakistan-based arms suppliers.

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3	Asst Manager/Manager - Hindi / Raj Basha (Official Language)	01	KP/S/08/2026 Dt: 29.04.2026
4	Sr. Manager, Asst. General Manager & Deputy General Manager for Planning/Production/ Civil/R&D/Marketing/Service/Maintenance under Special Recruitment Drive - 10th Attempt	09	KP/S/09/2026 Dt: 29.04.2026

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(विज्ञापन सं./Advt.No.: GA/PS/1220/Cont.Pilot/2025/2551 dated: 28/04/2026)

संविदा के आधार पर 06 पायलट (मरीन) की नियुक्ति हेतु वॉक-इन-इंटरव्यू
Walk-In-Interview for engagement 06 Nos. of Pilot (Marine) on contractual basis

दीनदयाल पत्तन प्राधिकरण, योजना में निर्धारित नियमों एवं शर्तों के अनुसार संविदा के आधार पर 06 पायलट (मरीन) [01-एस.सी., 01-एस.टी., 01- अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग (एनसीएल), 03-अनारक्षित] की नियुक्ति हेतु दिनांक 08/05/2026 को पूर्वाह्न 14:00 बजे से गांधीधाम (कच्छ), गुजरात-370201 में स्थित प्रशासनिक कार्यालय भवन में वॉक-इन-इंटरव्यू आयोजित कर रहा है।

Deendayal Port Authority intends to engage 06 Nos. of Pilots (Marine) on contract basis [01-SC, 01-ST, 01-OBC (NCL) and 03 UR] as per the terms & conditions set out in the scheme through Walk-in-Interview scheduled to be held on 08/05/2026 at 14:00 hrs. onwards at Administrative Office Building, Deendayal Port Authority, Gandhidham – Kutch, Gujarat – 370201.

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Post-Graduation with B.Ed. / M.Ed. with Minimum 5 years experience as Head of Section / Headmaster / Headmistress, preferably from CBSE Schools. Overseas experience is added advantage.

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- Graduate / Post Graduate in the relevant subject with B.Ed. and minimum 5 years experience in CBSE schools.
- KG teachers should be Montessori trained with 3 years teaching experience.
- Excellent Communication Skills in English.
- Computer Savvy (MS Office).
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Note
- Candidates with Degree through correspondence / private studies, need not apply.
- Applications clearly mentioning the subject / position applied for in the subject line, to be emailed to amzirec2026@gmail.com, to reach us within 7 days from the date of this advertisement.

Shortlisted candidates will be called for an interview.

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Applications are invited for the following posts from the eligible candidates in the prescribed format.

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1	Computer Engineering	Professor	01-VJ(A), 01-OBC
		Associate Professor	01-SC, 01-ST, 01-VJ(A), 01-SEBC
		Assistant Professor	01-SC, 01-SC(F), 01-ST,01-NT(B), 01-NT(C), 02-SEBC, 01-SEBC (F)
2	Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering	Professor	01-SC, 01-VJ(A), 01-OBC
		Associate Professor	01-ST, 01-VJ(A), 01-SEBC
		Assistant Professor	01-SC, 01-ST, 01-ST(F), 01-VJ(A), 01-NT(B), 01-NT(D), 01-SEBC, 01-SEBC(F), 01-EWS, 01-EWS(F) 01-Unreserved, 01-Unreserved(F)
3	Information Technology	Professor	01-SC, 01-VJ(A), 01-Unreserved
		Associate Professor	01-SC, 01-VJ(A)
		Assistant Professor	01-SC, 01-ST, 01-VJ(A), 01-NT(B) 01-SEBC, 01-SEBC(F), 01-EWS
4	Artificial Intelligence & Data Science	Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Associate Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
5	Electronics & Computer Engineering	Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Associate Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
6	Civil Engineering	Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-ST
7	Electrical Engineering	Assistant Professor	01-ST
8	Mechanical Engineering	Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-VJ(A), 01-OBC
9	Physics	Associate Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-ST
10	Mathematics	Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Associate Professor	01-SC, 01-Unreserved
		Assistant Professor	01-SC, 01-VJ(A), 01-OBC, 01-SEBC 01-Unreserved
11	Librarian	---	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
12	Director of Physical Education	---	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
	PG		
13	Computer Engineering	Associate Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
14	Data Science	Associate Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)
		Assistant Professor	01-Unreserved (Open to all)

(F) = Female
- Required qualification, experience, and Mandatory Teacher Trainings: As per Government of Maharashtra Resolution No.: संकेत-1111/प्र.क.44/19-तांशि दि 2, dated 11-9-2019 (Degree); AICTE Notification dated 1-3-2019; UGC Notification dated 18-7-2018, SPPU rules/regulations and amendments thereof from time to time.
- Pay Scale: As per institute's 7th pay commission policy.
- Reservation for Divyang (UG Posts): Professor-01 post (Blindness or Low vision). Associate Professor-01 post (Blindness or Low vision).Assistant Professor -02 posts (1-Blindness or Low vision, 1 Deaf and Hard of Hearing).
- Eligible candidates are required to fill out the online application form, upload the necessary documents, and submit a hardcopy of the application form along with the necessary documents to the Institute within 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. For the online application form & other details, please refer to our website https://pict.edu
- After submitting the online application, the candidates belonging to the reserved category will receive an acknowledgment receipt along with a copy of the application (in PDF format) via email. The reserved category candidate must then forward the acknowledgment receipt and the application copy to the Reservation Cell, Savitribai Phule Pune University, only via email at reservation@unipune.ac.in, for information purposes only.

SECRETARY, S.C.T.R., PUNE

GUJARAT METRO RAIL CORPORATION (GMRC) LIMITED
(A Joint Venture of Govt. of Gujarat and Govt. of India)
Block No.1, First Floor, Karmayogi Bhavan, Sector 10/A, Gandhinagar: 382010, Gujarat, India (CIN): U60200GJ2010SGC059407

Gujarat Metro Rail Corporation (GMRC) Limited, jointly and equally owned by Government of India and Government of Gujarat, is entrusted with the responsibility of implementation of Metro Rail Projects in Gujarat and its Operations & Maintenance.

GMRC invites applications from qualified and experienced candidates for appointment of key Management position of **Director (Systems, Electrical, Rolling Stock) on deputation/contract basis**, on standard terms & conditions of the Organization. Last date to apply is **26.06.2026.**

Applications are also invited from qualified fresher candidates for Non-Executive Trainee posts of Operations & Maintenance - **Station Controller/Train Operator, Jr. Engineer, and Maintainers.** Last date to apply is **28.05.2026.**

Further, applications invited from qualified and experienced candidates for various positions such as **JGM (Telecom/AFC), DGM (Traction) & Asst. Manager (Rolling Stock)** on contract/deputation/post-superannuation basis. Last date to apply is **13.05.2026.**

For detailed recruitment notification, please visit career page of our website www.gujaratmetrorail.com.

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
Address : 17th Floor, Hindustan Times House Building, Kasturbha Gandhi Marg, New Delhi – 110 001

NICDC invites applications for the following posts:

Sr. No.	Name of the Post	Experience (Years)	Number of Posts	Job Type
1.	Senior Executive - Finance & Accounts	2	1	• Regular • Salary As per NICDC's Pay Structure (Flexible)
2.	Assistant Manager - Company Secretary	4	2	
3.	Assistant Manager - Finance & Accounts	4	1	
4.	Manager - Legal & Contract Management	7	1	
5.	Senior Manager - Marketing	10	1	
6.	Lead - Business Development & Knowledge Management	10	1	• Contractual for 3 Years • Salary - Negotiable as per Industry Standards
7.	Lead - Facility Management	10	1	
8.	Lead - Contract Management	10	1	

- Interested candidates may visit the NICDC website for more details and apply online at **www.nicdc.in (Careers> Current Opening> Apply Online)** on or before **17th May, 2026 by 17:00 HRS.** No other mode of application shall be accepted/entertained.
- Actual number of posts may vary depending upon the suitability of candidates.

NTPC Mining Limited
(A Wholly Owned Subsidiary of NTPC Limited)

Walk-in-Interview

Pakri Barwadih Coal Mining Project invites applications for:

Duty Doctors/GDMOS [Post-05 (UR- 2, OBC-1, SC-1, EWS -1)]: on ad hoc basis initially for 1 year plus provision of 2 extension of 6 months duration on same terms & condition (1 year + 6 months + 6 months), based on performance from date of engagement & shall be dispensed as per NTPC guidelines.

Minimum Qualification:

MBBS with one-year compulsory internship training; 1-year experience post internship is desirable. Candidate must have MCI/State Council registration.

Remunerations:

Rs. 1,23,000.00 per month. They will be entitled for rent free bachelor accommodation & medical facilities for self at the project.

Mode of Selection:

All interested candidates shall report to NML Transit Camp, Julu Park, Hazaribagh, Jharkhand for Walk-in-Interview on 08th May, 2026 at 10:00 AM with the following original and 02 photocopy sets.

a) Self-attested Bio-data form with recent 02-colored passport size photographs.
b) Proof of Date of Birth-10th Marks sheet/ Certificate.
c) Aadhaar Card.
d) All Relevant Professional Degrees.
e) MCI/State Council Registration certificate.
f) Experience Certificate and Caste Certificate.
g) Candidates are required to send the soft copies of CV with relevant documents at the e-mail address: **pbcmp_hr@nml.co.in** within 10 days from the date of publication of this advertisement

Reporting Place:

- NML Transit Camp, Julu Park, Hazaribagh, Jharkhand
  PIN code-825301, Contact No.- 8319012408
- NML Management reserves the right to cancel/ restrict/enlarge/modify/alter the advertisement, if need so arises, without issuing further notice or assigning any reason whatsoever.

Mining for Aatmanirbharta

Sabarmati Gas Ltd.
(A Joint Venture of GSPC and BPCL)
Plot No. 907, Sector 21, Gandhinagar, Gujarat - 382021

Sabarmati Gas Limited (SGL) is one of the largest City Gas Distribution Companies promoted by GSPC and BPCL. SGL's gas distribution networks spanning in the areas of Gandhinagar, Mehsana, Sabarkantha, Aravalli and Patan districts in North Gujarat, retail natural gas to Industrial, Commercial, Domestic and transportation sectors. We enable energy, opportunities and provide dream careers to fuel progress.

Sr. No.	Posts	No. of Posts.
1	Chief Manager – O&M	1
2	Sr. Manager – Audit	1
3	Sr. Manager – Company Secretary	1
4	Manager – HRD	1
5	Manager – Legal	1
6	Sr. Executive – O&M (PNG)	1
7	Sr. Executive – IT	1

For more information about the above job vacancies and to submit application, visit our website: **www.sabarmatigas.in/career.php**
Last Date for submitting application: 9th May 2026.

SHEKHAWATI HOMOEOPATHY MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
Kochhor Jeenmata Road, Kochhor, Sikar (Rajasthan)

REQUIREMENTS
PROFESSOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR & ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENTS
Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacy, Organon Materia Medica, Repertory

Qualification, Pay Scale and Experience : As per **NCH** norms.
How to apply : Interested candidates may send their resume till 4th May 2026 at **hrsgisikar@gmail.com**
Contact @ 9351007291, 9929431235

JOB OPENINGS

Applications are invited for the following vacancies in the constituent colleges of Nitte (Deemed to be University):

NITTE INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION
Deralakatte, Mangaluru
(Email: hod.nico@nitte.edu.in)

Assistant Professor
Masters degree in Animation, Film Technology, Design, Multimedia or related disciplines. Candidates with industry experience in VFX, Filmmaking or Web Development will be preferred. Candidate should have a passion for teaching and knowledge of latest tools and technologies in the respective domain.

NGSM INSTITUTE OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES
Deralakatte, Mangaluru
(Email: principal.ngsmips@nitte.edu.in)

Research Associate/Assistant
MSc (Zoology, Biotechnology, related life sciences). Candidates with basic knowledge of laboratory animal handling and research techniques will be preferred.

NMAM INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Nitte Off-campus Centre, Karkala
(Email: hr.nmamit@nitte.edu.in)

Resident Hostel Warden (Male & Female)
Master's / Bachelor's degree with fluency in English, Hindi and Kannada. The candidate must reside in the hostel and will be responsible for student monitoring, maintaining discipline and providing basic counseling support, when required. Experience in similar line of work will be an added advantage.

DR. NSAM FIRST GRADE COLLEGE
Nitte Off-campus Centre, Karkala
(Email: principal_nsamfgcn@nitte.edu.in)

Assistant Professors in Computer Science | Commerce & Management | Statistics | Economics | English.
Master's degree in the respective fields with a minimum of 60% marks. PhD preferred.

Candidates may email their resumes to the respective institutional email IDs provided.

NITTE (Deemed to be University)
Where there is space for every dream.
6th Floor, Medical Sciences Complex
Deralakatte, Mangaluru – 575018
Tel: 0824-2204300/01/02
E-mail: hr@nitte.edu.in

भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक सर्विसेज़ बोर्ड
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA SERVICES BOARD
Advt. No. RBISB/BA/01/2026-27

Recruitment for the Posts of Officers in Grade 'B' (Direct Recruit-DR) (On Probation-OP) (General/DEPR/DSIM) Cadres - Panel Year - 2026 in Reserve Bank of India

Applications are invited for recruitment to the following posts in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for the Panel Year - 2026:

Sr. No.	Name of the Post	Vacancies
1	Officers in Grade 'B' (DR)- General	40
2	Officers in Grade 'B' (DR)- Department of Economic and Policy Research (DEPR)	10
3	Officers in Grade 'B' (DR)- Department of Statistics and Information Management (DSIM)	10
	Total	60

2. For all other details such as eligibility criteria, reservation of vacancies, scheme of selection, submission of online application and other instructions, please refer to the detailed advertisement to be published on the Bank's website **(www.rbi.org.in)** on **April 29, 2026 (tentatively)** and in the Employment News/ Rozgar Samachar issue dated **May 02, 2026 / subsequent issue.** Candidates can apply for the aforementioned posts only by online mode through the Bank's website **(www.rbi.org.in)**.

3. **Important Dates**:**

Website Link Open - For Online Registration of Applications and Payment of Application Fees/Intimation Charges	April 29 to May 20, 2026 (till 06:00 PM)
Phase-I Online Examination of Grade 'B' (DR) - General	June 13, 2026
Phase-I Online Examination of Grade 'B' (DR) - DEPR (Paper-I and II) / DSIM (Paper-I)	June 14, 2026
Phase-II Online Examination for Grade 'B' (DR) - General	July 25, 2026
Phase-II Online / Written Examination for Grade 'B' (DR) - DEPR (Paper-I and II) /DSIM (Paper-II and III)	July 26, 2026

** The Board reserves the right to make any changes in these dates.
NOTE: Corrigendum, if any, issued on the above advertisement, will be published only on the Bank's website **(www.rbi.org.in)**.

Mumbai Port Authority

Invites applications from candidates for the post of **Joint Director (01 post) on deputation basis.** The last date for receipt of applications for the post of Joint Director on deputation basis is **29/6/2026.**

For details regarding eligibility criteria, etc., interested candidates may visit our website **www.mumbaiport.gov.in (People & Career/Jobs)** and submit their application on the Online Application Portal of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

MbPA-02-2026

CONTRAPUNTO

Where it is a duty to worship the sun, it is pretty sure to be a crime to examine the laws of heat

– JOHN MORLEY

Woods & Shoulds

Forest fires are getting worse in India. It's time to get serious about decarbonisation

Sunday and Monday were infernally hot. Indian cities took the top 95 positions for day temperatures. And the hills promised no respite. They were hot, too, and burning. Reports of forest fires from Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu made Page 1 yesterday. Nothing unusual there – it's India's annual 12-week wildfire season after all. But satellite images showed 13,771 large fires across Indian forests by Monday, which is more than the average for past 15 summers. And it fits into a global trend of worsening wildfire seasons.

Across the world, forest fires are starting earlier and lasting longer, for three main reasons. One, rising temperatures, especially at night; two, less rain; three, early melting of snow. In India, the snow factor only applies to northern mountains, but the other two are experienced everywhere. For example, while our attention is riveted to fires in scenic Kumaon and Nilgiris, Gujarat and Bihar have had the most forest fires in the past four weeks.

Now, forest fires are "normal". They occurred before humans – friction caused by wind in dry weather, and lightning, caused massive fires. What's abnormal about today's fires is the warmer climate we have created, which makes starting and sustaining a fire easier. Studies show forest fires now burn twice as much tree cover as they did 20 years ago. And they add even more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, making Earth toastier. While burning of fossil fuels releases 37bn tonnes of CO_2 annually, forest fires can add another 8bn tonnes, or 20% more. Plus, loss of trees reduces capacity to pull CO_2 out of the air. In 2024, the world lost 13.5mn hectares of forest cover – more than the area of Greece.

Long story short, to save forests, the world needs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions fast. That means, burning less fossil fuels. Easier said than done when temperatures and incomes are rising. ACs account for about 7% of India's power demand, when fewer than 10% of Indians use them. What will happen as AC and car ownership shoot up in the world's largest population? It depends on our will to decarbonise. On Saturday, when India's energy demand made a new record, solar energy met 22% of it. We have enough installed capacity to raise this to 50% or even 60%. But the planet won't cool in a day. We still have to fight forest fires with planning, community-based forest management, and remote sensing. There's no substitute for boots on the ground.

Docs Who Won't Listen

Medical boards have become a hostile barrier to women's reproductive rights

On paper, Indian women have a sympathetic law to access abortion. In practice, it is a permission slip that the medical establishment frequently refuses to sign, often persuading courts to also follow its lead. But on Friday, Supreme Court really called out such overreach, by AIIMS no less. The bench of Justices Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan underlined that neither the absence of foetal abnormality, nor the passage of time, negate a pregnant woman's right to terminate her pregnancy. These are, actually, arguments used to deny women's autonomy, as commonly as wrongly.

But if doctors can use such arguments to block a woman's exercise of autonomy, it's because the law doesn't empower her to seek an abortion simply on the basis of deciding what's best for her. While one medical practitioner must support her decision for a pregnancy up to 20 weeks, two are needed between 20-24 weeks, and beyond this, she must be supported by a specialised medical board. As in the above case, this support is often denied on the basis of foetal viability, a legal concept imported wholesale from American anti-abortion jurisprudence. But this is only one of the many faces of medical stonewalling. A 27-year-old married mother of two pleading mental health, a 20-year-old female NEET aspirant pleading career, a 15-year-old rape survivor… The only thing common to all the women who are being denied access to abortion, is that they are women, Indian women.

Of course, she will fight on. Because she can't just surrender control of her own body, inseparable from her mind. Even if that means a strange situation, where the courthouse, not the clinic, seems to have become the primary venue for reproductive health. The only way to escape this abnormal condition is to properly hand over the right to abortion to women. Right now, it very much vests with doctors instead.

Questionable democracy

How much govt do we need to have, to govern us properly?

Jug Suraiya

Democracy is always a question mark, often an exclamation point, but never a full stop because democracy's work is never done.

Democracy constantly reinvents itself, and India's democracy, the largest in the world, is working overtime to reinvent itself, in an exercise that has raised more question marks than there are quills on an agitated porcupine.

The question that our democracy is asking itself is whether it is democratic enough in the size of the govt to implement its day-to-day working, the govt that the electorate votes into office.

As the size of our electorate has increased, to reflect this increase, should the size of our govt also increase proportionately?

The exercise, called delimitation, is proposing to establish what the limits of democracy are, or ought to be. Does a numerically bigger govt mean more democracy, or less? Is democracy subject to the laws of mathematics, or simple arithmetic?

It might well seem so. A polity of a million people with just one person to govern the whole lot of them would not be a democracy, but a monarchy or a dictatorship. However, a polity of one million people in which all the one million deem themselves to be rulers, would stretch the definition of democracy as a govt of the people, by the people, and for the people, to make it indistinguishable from anarchy, in which everyone's a ruler and no one is ruled.

secondopinion

Like Goldilocks, democracy needs to find a chair that is not too small, not too big, but just the right size to seat itself in.

This is easier said than done. Unlike Goldilocks, democracy requires not a chair but a multiplicity of chairs, which make up the sitting room, called Parliament.

Is the current size of our Parliament democratic enough for democracy, or does the calculus of democracy require more?

Yes it does, say proponents of delimitation. No, say those who think delimitation is de limit. With electoral scales hanging in the balance in four states and a Union territory, delimitation adds another question to the endless question marks of democracy.

What Bengal's Saying Today

Anti-incumbency against Trinamool is high, but BJP'll still find it tough. Four reasons: disconnect with Bengali 'culture', immigration isn't a big issue, anger over SIR, GOI blamed for 'discontinuing' rural jobs scheme

Neeraj Kaushal

Economist on field trip across Bengal

Mamata Banerjee's record as chief minister of Bengal has been a mixed bag. After 15 years at the helm, her party faces strong anti-incumbency. Yet, for BJP, the principal opposition party in the state, the task of unseating her govt remains an uphill battle. Here's why.

Illegal, who? | First, BJP's primary goals for the state do not reflect the concerns of people of Bengal. Its two topmost campaign promises are to tighten border security, and curb illegal border crossings from Bangladesh. These may have resonated with Hindu alarmists across the country in the national elections but are not major concerns of Bengali voters in the state assembly election.

That is an important insight gained from statewide field visits. Voters I interviewed reported no direct contact with illegal migrants. Many had never met an illegal migrant. One young man in Murshidabad said that he had met Hindu migrants from Bangladesh but no "ghuspetiyas" (Amit Shah's contemptuous phrase for Muslim immigrants who've crossed over illegally). Statisticians will tell you that a few anecdotes like these do not constitute conclusive proof. True, but the lack of public alarm one found on a field trip suggests BJP faces an uphill task.

Infiltration of Bangladeshi Muslims may be a serious concern in Delhi or Mumbai, but Bengali voters are not shaking with fear that infiltration from Bangladesh will change the state's demography. They simply want good jobs and a vibrant economy that delivers these jobs, an issue on which neither party has devoted much time in their campaigns.

SIRred & shaken | Second, the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, and cancellation of 90L voters, have generated anxiety and resentment among large sections of the electorate. Routine revision of voters' list is essential to exclude duplicates, the dead, and missing individuals. Yet, the exercise in West Bengal has created existential fear among voters and Election Commission has lost all credibility with voters, both Hindu and Muslim.

Migrant workers from the state are returning to vote to ensure their names remain on the rolls – they fear a failure to vote may become an excuse to deny them citizenship. Many politicians across the spectrum doubt if the SIR issue will at all determine the election outcome. BJP hopes Muslim votes will get divided between TMC, Congress and Left Front. But the fears stoked by the SIR issue may consolidate Muslim votes behind TMC.

Image: AI

That non-Bengali challenge | Third, Hindi-speaking politicians from outside the state have led the BJP campaign, reinforcing perceptions that the party is an outside force more than homegrown. Compounding these perceptions is the party's failure to project a credible Bengali chief ministerial candidate.

POLLS 2026 Bengal, TN, Assam, Kerala

BJP claims the party strategy has long been not to name a CM-to-be in state elections. Yet, it adds to BJP's difficulties in projecting itself as a Bengali party.

Mamata has also taken advantage of BJP's inability to bond with Bengali voters. She has made the election a battle to save Bengali identity. In her speeches, she points at the attitudes and practices of local BJP netas in the Hindi-belt as a marker for what would happen if BJP were to win in Bengal. "They will not let you eat fish, meat or even eggs. You will not be able to speak in Bengali. If you do, they will call you Bangladeshi," she warned in her campaign speeches.

BJP has struggled to put up a serious defence against Mamata's allegations. Having passed a series of regulatory directives on meat shops and restaurants in BJP-run Delhi, UP and Bihar, BJP is in a dilemma as to how to deny TMC's allegations.

The easiest response is to laugh them off, as Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam CM and an active campaigner for BJP in north Bengal, did. In a campaign speech, he invited Mamata to a meat-eating contest and challenged that he can eat two kilos more of meat than the TMC chief. Some in the audience laughed, but others sneered at the shallowness of his tirade.

Jobs, jobs, jobs | Finally, Mamata's campaign slogan *'bodol noy, bodla chai'* (not change, but revenge) has resonated with voters deprived of benefits under centrally sponsored schemes such as NREG and PM Awas Yojana that Centre has cancelled in Bengal.

Since March 2022, Bengal has not received funds for NREG, following Centre's allegation of widespread corruption, financial irregularities, and non-compliance with central directives. While these allegations may not be entirely untrue, similar irregularities did not lead to cancellation of funds in other states. The cancellation in Bengal was, thus, seen as reeking of political vendetta.

NREG provided a constitutional guarantee of 100 days of employment a year to one person per family. But when Centre stopped releasing NREG funds, over 1.2cr holders of job cards lost jobs. Studies show that this has led to large-scale migration from rural to urban areas, as well as to other states. Families that were approved to receive funds under PM Awas Yojana have not received the funds. Voters who have lost the approved funds for PM Awas Yojana, or have lost jobs assured under NREG, are angry.

Anger is a stronger emotion than hope for change. And that is what will determine the outcome of the assembly election.

With Thorium, India Will Be In Its Element

Washington isn't interested in being a guarantor of anything, including energy supplies. New Delhi's strategic response must centre around the one energy source it has in abundance

Swarnodeep Homroy

Prof of Finance, Univ of Groningen, Netherlands

War in West Asia has, once again, exposed the fragility of India's energy security. Nearly 90% of its crude oil is imported, and close to half originates in the Gulf. The standoff in Strait of Hormuz has rippled through the economy, compounded by rising demand amid scorching summer temperatures. As the crisis drags on, structural lessons are coming into focus: West's use of energy security as a tool of statecraft has entered a new phase where political alliances are largely redundant.

Since the Russia-Ukraine war, India has managed this vulnerability with considerable pragmatism, buying large volumes of discounted Russian crude that Western countries chose not to import directly. By 2024, Russia had become India's largest oil supplier.

This was celebrated as strategic autonomy. In reality, it operated within a system whose rules are still largely shaped by Western institutions. Washington tolerated these purchases for pragmatic reasons. The arrangement keeps Russian crude flowing into global markets, preventing a damaging oil price spike.

Rules of the trade remain governed by Western shipping, insurance, and financial networks, preserving American leverage over every barrel. India's access to Russian oil does not reflect geopolitical freedom, but participation in a managed energy system whose architecture it cannot yet shape.

When Washington imposed tariffs on Indian exports, partly related to the continued purchases of Russian crude, New Delhi had to adjust its import mix, accepting costlier energy inputs. The use of multiple policy instruments to control global energy flows, is now an unmistakable American priority.

India is not the first country to face this recalibration. For decades, cheap Russian pipeline gas underwrote Europe's industrial competitiveness, particularly Germany's. When that supply collapsed after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, American LNG filled the gap, but at a structural cost. By 2025, US had become Europe's dominant supplier. In July of that year, EU signed a $750bn energy purchase agreement, stabilising supplies, but tying the continent's energy future to Washington more tightly than at any point in history.

The dependence extended beyond fuel. Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, channelled hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies to clean energy manufacturing, on the condition that production take place in US. Volkswagen, Siemens, and BASF began shifting investment across the Atlantic, while thyssenkrupp closed European facilities. What began as an energy emergency had become an industrial migration.

In Washington, there is bipartisan consensus to

Image: AI

rebuild American industrial capacity, and shorten supply chains in semiconductors, batteries, critical minerals, and energy technology. India does not yet face Europe's predicament. However, the underlying risks are the same.

The Feb 2026 India-US proposed trade agreement illustrated the dilemma. In exchange for tariff relief and removal of punitive duties, India agreed to reduce purchasing Russian oil, and committed to buying roughly $500bn worth of American energy, technology, and industrial products over five years.

Europe's own $750bn energy agreement with US, emerged under the pressure of crisis. India's deal emerged under the pressure of tariffs. The circumstances differ, but in both cases, they lead to a greater dependence on US. This dependence is manageable only as long as American commitments remain credible. But Iran war has exposed the fragility of American security guarantees. Much as Britain's standing as a global power collapsed after the Suez crisis, the credibility of American security guarantees is likely to be reassessed.

The current energy crisis offers a lens into this emerging order – one in which energy and industrial policies are no longer separable from foreign policy, and strategic supply chains cannot be left entirely to global markets. India's tradition of strategic multilateralism, may prove to be exactly the capability the next phase of globalisation demands. But political multilateralism needs to be paired with an accelerated push towards energy sovereignty.

While the world's attention was fixed on Hormuz, and diplomatic manoeuvring in Islamabad, India's thorium programme reached a major developmental milestone on April 6. With the world's largest deposits in India, thorium offers something no Gulf relationship or trade deal can: domestic energy at scale, and immunity to geopolitical disruption. Renewable energy generation has also expanded rapidly, and the opening up of the nuclear sector to private participation may expand nuclear power in coming decades.

But breeder and thorium systems are capital-intensive, slow to commercialise. They won't deliver near-term power at a cost that competes easily with renewables, gas, conventional reactors. In the interim, India must navigate the multi-polar geopolitics of energy.

This demands a foreign policy that is more institutionalised and less reactive. India's energy relationships have historically been managed episodically, rather than by a long-term strategy to diversify sources and build leverage.

India does have a head start: its multilateral traditions, diplomatic reach across competing blocs, and now a credible path to domestic energy at scale. But converting that position into a durable advantage will require stronger institutions, and a political class willing to think in decades, rather than electoral cycles.

Calvin & Hobbes

LOOK AT HOW PEOPLE ARE PORTRAYED IN COMIC STRIPS. THE WOMEN ARE INDECISIVE WHINERS, NAGGING SHREWS, AND BIMBOS!
AND THE MEN ARE NO BETTER. THEY'RE BEFUDDLED MORONS, HEAVY DRINKERS, GLUTTONS, AND LAZY GOOF-OFFS! EVERYONE IS INCOMPETENT, UNAPPRECIATED, AND UNSUCCESSFUL!
WHAT KIND OF INSIDIOUS SOCIAL PROGRAMMING IS THIS?! NO WONDER THE WORLD'S SUCH A MESS! I DEMAND POLITICALLY CORRECT, MORALLY UPLIFTING ROLE MODELS IN THE FUNNIES!
YES, WE ALL KNOW HOW FUNNY GOOD ROLE MODELS ARE.
AND LOOK, ALL THE KIDS ARE OBNOXIOUS BRATS!

Sacredspace

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Changing Gears: Move At What Suits You Best

Rajashree Birla

Recently, one has been reading a lot about student shootings. A student running amok, gunning down innocent lives mindlessly and then ebbing out his own. Largely overseas. In India, at many institutes of technology, you hear of students committing suicide. One feels so concerned. The highly complex competitive cutthroat environment is a blame factor, along with problems of the mind among many. Parents can help stem the situation to an extent.

Children are the greatest gift of God and undeniably the greatest blessing for all parents. True that parenting today is extremely challenging, with both parents busy with their jobs. The sheer competitiveness that you see among children and more so in parents is alarming. Somewhere, the fabric of our society needs to be retextured. Instead of always being in the fastest forward gear, move at what suits you best.

There is need for greater emotional bonding between parents and children, on working with a warm heart, a cool head, a strong sense of values and a firm hand on discipline. Parents are the most important teachers, who should never succumb to a culture of indulgence.

Not long ago, when small affordable cars started dotting the roads of Mumbai, a dear friend gifted her granddaughter one of those vehicles. To her utter surprise, the teenager said she couldn't drive the car. Why? Because then she would be looked upon as a lower middle-class person! Both of us were appalled. And after some mulling over, the gift was withdrawn, the approach being 'let her uber it out.' This was a rare decision. Other elders would have indulged the child with a high-end car.

THE SPEAKING TREE

Parents are like the North Star. Like a compass, they guide children, embed the right values, impressing that good deeds are our monuments and give them a sense of direction at every turn in life's journey.

Recount Kahlil Gibran's seminal book, *The Prophet*: *"Your children are not your children…*

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,

For they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls,

For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow".

My husband, Adityaji, and i had read *The Prophet* many, many moons ago side by side. Both of us then made a pact that this piece of sage advice would always be on our radar as we raise our children. We believed that parenting meant nurturing, giving unconditional love and support, imbibing values and giving them wings, of course, a good education. We felt that if these were in place, children would grow up to be good, responsible human beings.

Let me give you a shining example that all will relate to easily. The example of God of Indian cricket, Sachin Tendulkar. His natural talent was discovered by his father when Sachin was seven years old. He was groomed by his coach, Ramakant Achrekar. Sachin's brother would always go with Sachin. It is this family structure and teacher support that, by Sachin's own admission, provided the bedrock of his cricketing career.

The point that one wishes to drive home is that if we mould children right from the start to give of their very best and then to think of success as incidental, have no aggression in thought or deed, pursue their path and have a mind of their own with discipline as a process of learning and growing, enjoying each day as it comes, life would be different. No aberrations as shootings or suicides.

The writer is chairperson, Aditya Birla Centre for Community Initiatives and Rural Development

SNAP SHOTS

India men thrash Tunisia

The Indian men's team made a strong start to its campaign at the World Team Table Tennis Championships with a 3-0 win over Tunisia, while the women's side was awarded a walk-over against Uganda in London on Tuesday. Manush Shah, Manav Thakkar and Harmeet Desai registered impressive wins for India. Manush Shah defeated Essid Wassim 3-1 before Manav Thakkar and Harmeet Desai picked up identical 3-0 wins.

Sreeshankar wins gold: Star long jumper Murali Sreeshankar continued his impressive start to the season as he won the gold with a leap of 8.12m at the Simbine Classic in Pretoria, South Africa, on Tuesday. Hosts' Divan Manuel (8.07) and Luvo Manyonga (7.86) took the silver and bronze, respectively.

Vismaya gets two-year ban: Asian Games 4x400m relay gold-winner VK Vismaya has been handed two-year suspension by the NADA's Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel. Meanwhile, sprinter N Shanmuga Srinivas has been handed four-year ban by the ADDP from February 6, 2025 for "Evading, Refusing or Failing to Submit to Sample Collection".

Indian lifters shine: Indian lifters impressed at the Commonwealth Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships in Apia, Samoa, securing gold medals on the second day of competition. Sunil Singh (men's 65 kg), Aisangfa Gogoi (women's 58kg) and Abhinob Gogoi (men's 71kg) took the gold.

WFI bars U-17 wrestler: The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) has barred an U-17 wrestler from competing on the opening day of the National Championships in Sambhaji Nagar after her father produced two birth certificates from different states.

East Bengal cruise: East Bengal FC scored a 3-0 victory over Odisha FC in Margao on Tuesday. Bipin Singh Thounaojam (11th minute) handed East Bengal an early lead before Youssef Ezzejjari (70 & 84) struck to wrap up a comfortable win for the Red and Gold Brigade.

Militao to miss World Cup: Real Madrid's Brazilian defender Eder Militao will miss the World Cup after undergoing surgery on a hamstring tear, the Spanish club said.

Stones to leave City: John Stones will leave Manchester City at the end of the season after 10 trophy-filled years at the Etihad, the Premier League club announced on Tuesday. The defender, 31, joined City from Everton in 2016, becoming manager Pep Guardiola's second signing, and has made 293 appearances to date, scoring 19 goals.

Modric undergoes surgery: Luka Modric has undergone successful surgery after fracturing his left cheekbone, the Croatian Football Federation said on Monday, weeks before the 40-year-old AC Milan midfielder is due to participate in his fifth World Cup. Modric sustained the injury following a clash of heads with Juventus midfielder Manuel Locatelli during Sunday's 0-0 Serie A draw.

Atletico chase redemption

Simeone's Side Face Arsenal Challenge In Semifinal

Atletico Madrid and Diego Simeone have regularly tasted the sting of disappointment, even in what is the club's golden age.

They host Arsenal on Wednesday in the Champions League semifinals chasing redemption after their crushing Copa del Rey final defeat little over a week ago.

Tens of thousands of Atletico fans travelled down to Seville only to go home empty-handed, just as they did in the 2014 and 2016 Champions League finals against bitter rivals Real Madrid. Atletico have

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

never won Europe's premier competition, also beaten in their other final appearance in 1974.

They can take a first step towards a fourth final against Mikel Arteta's side this week, in which they are celebrating the club's 123rd anniversary. In their first game back home after the Copa final disappointment, on Saturday against Athletic Bilbao, Atletico's fans gave the team a cold reception. "The fans don't need messages (from me), what they need is to win," noted Simeone, Atletico's most decorated manager, in Seville. However by the end of the team's 3-2 victory over Athletic, only their second in the last nine games across all competitions, the mood had lightened.

AFP

ALL SET: Arsenal's Bukayo Saka (left) with teammates during a training session

"We have to get up from that blow and give everything to get to the final," key striker Julian Alvarez said on Monday.

The Arsenal tie offers a route to immediate atonement, and by Wednesday the atmosphere will be frenzied, intoxicating, as it was for the quarterfinal elimination of Barcelona.

Atletico are no longer at the Vicente Calderon but the Metropolitano stadium is just as intense, louder still, with the increased capacity.Opened in 2017, it obviously does not have the history of its predecessor -- that will take time, and intense performances on nights like these, to build. The Rojiblancos' support are the loudest in Spain and Simeone called on them to give his team the edge against the Premier League leaders. "Atletico have struggled to reach the Champions League semifinals and finals," explained the coach. "We've built this success through hard work and the support of our fans. We need them now more than ever, and hopefully, we can give them what they want on the pitch."

When the conditions are right, at the Metropolitano Atletico have proven they can dismantle any side. They blitzed Barcelona 4-0 in the Copa del Rey semifinal first leg, a lead which proved unassailable, and romped to a 5-2 derby victory over Real Madrid there earlier this season. AFP

Live, Sony, 12.30 am, Thursday

Man Utd edge Brenftord

Manchester United moved within touching distance of qualifying for the Champions League as Casemiro and Benjamin Sesko sealed a 2-1 win against Brentford on Monday. Casemiro put United ahead in the early stages at Old Trafford and Sesko doubled their lead before the interval. Mathias Jensen's late strike couldn't stop United cementing their grip on third place in the Premier League. They are 11 points clear of sixth-placed Bright-

FOOTBALL WRAP

on, with the top five guaranteed to reach next season's Champions League.

Michael Carrick's side need just two points from their last four matches to ensure their return to Europe's elite club competition for the first time since 2023-24.

On Sunday, United host bitter rivals Liverpool, who sit three points behind them in fourth, in a clash that will go a long way to deciding who finishes third. **Results: EPL:** Manchester United 2 (Casemiro 11, Sesko 43) bt Brentford 1 (Jensen 87). **Spanish league:** Espanyol 0 drew with Levante 0. **Italian league:** Cagliari 3 (Mendy 1, 8, Borelli 47) bt Atalanta 2 (Scamacca 40, 45); Lazio 3 (Pellegrini 50, Pedro 80, Maldini 90+5) drew with Udinese 3 (Ehizibue 18, Atta 86, 90+3). AGENCIES

Advani to face Kothari in final

Carlow (Ireland): For the second straight year, the final of the IBSF World Billiards Championship will be an all-Indian affair. In a repeat of last year's title clash, champion Sourav Kothari will take on Pankaj Advani. In the semifinals on Tuesday morning, Advani outclassed England's Robert Hall 1184-420 to make his ninth straight finale. At the adjacent table, Kothari rallied to score a come-from-behind 633-443 victory over Dhvaj Haria.

Advani fired the first salvo with a gritty 129, but

WORLD BILLIARDS

Hall, made runs of 54, 73 and 104 to go up 279-255 in the 150-minute affair. When the Englishman missed a red in-off to the centre pocket, Advani got off his chair in a jiffy and made capital of the easy leave. He gathered the balls at the top of the table in double quick time and showcased his repertoire. Until he lost position following a red in-off to the top right-hand pocket when on a break of 299. He double-baulked Hall and was back at the table soon to

ON COURSE: Pankaj Advani

put the match beyond Hall's reach with another silken-smooth break of 217.

Having taken a 784-314 lead, the writing was on the wall. Kothari may have eventually run away with the match, but it was Dhvaj who did the front-running. The southpaw made his intentions quite clear with a 268 early in the match. Unfortunately, he failed to maintain the tempo and crumbled under the champion's fightback. **Results (Indians unless mentioned): Semifinals:** Pankaj Advani 1184 (129, 299, 217, 153, 68) bt Robert Hall (Eng) 420 (54, 73, 104); Sourav Kothari 633 (94, 165, 85, 68, 125) bt Dhvaj Haria 443 (268, 75, 53). **Quarters:** Advani 755 (141, 113, 111, 51, 85, 99) bt Martin Goodwill (Eng) 356 (77, 50); Hall 425 (87, 53, 80) bt Siddharth Parikh 408 (125, 82); Dhvaj 459 (76, 94, 95, 52) bt Shrikrishna S 376 (171, 148); Kothari 757 (105, 96, 242, 199, 102) bt David Causier (Eng) 498 (84, 113, 50, 186). AGENCIES

Sinner in quarters

Jannik Sinner suggested the Madrid Open organisers should reconsider their tournament scheduling to avoid late-night finishes like the one Rafael Jodar experienced in the third round on Sunday.

In a rare 11:00 am start on Tuesday, Sinner moved past British 19th seed Cameron Norrie 6-2, 7-5 to reach the quarterfinals.

He explained he was put on first on Manolo Santana Stadium so that Jodar, his potential next opponent, would be scheduled in the afternoon to give the Spaniard time to recover from his three-set win over Joao Fonseca that ended at 1:00 am on Monday morning. He will next face 19-year-old Jodar in what will be a highly-anticipated last-eight showdown. Jodar's dream run on home soil continued with a convincing 7-5, 6-0 thumping of Vit Kopriva.

Casper Ruud fought back from the brink to keep his title defence alive with a 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/3) victory over Stefanos Tsitsipas. Arthur Fils advanced to the quarterfinals with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Argentine 25th seed Tomas Martin Etcheverry. He will take on Jiri Lehecka, who beat Italian Lorenzo Musetti 6-3, 6-3.

In WTA action, Mirra Andreeva defeated Canadian Leylah Fernandez 7-6 (7/1), 6-3 to reach her first Madrid semifinal. AFP

Viveks down BCYA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Viveks Sports Club cruised past BCYA 41-9 in the U-13 girls' Super League stage of the State Sub-Junior Basketball Championship for the BS Narayan Memorial Trophy here on Tuesday.

At the Sree Kanteerava Stadium courts, Viveks led throughout the match, with their coordinated passing

BASKETBALL

key to their dominance. Their teamwork was evident in their on-court communication, sharp interceptions, and balanced gameplay, as they consistently relied on calculated passing to build their attacks.

The players remained well-coordinated which enabled them to control the game's pace.

Viveks took the lead in the first quarter itself with a score of 17-0 and the gap only widened in the remaining period through their sustained and disciplined effort. Despite BCYA's attempts to defend and intercept, it was a comfortable win for Viveks, with a late basket just before the final buzzer stretching the margin further. Anantha was the standout contributor with 10 points to her name.

Results: League Stage: Boys: PPC 67 (Daiwik 34, Dhawaki 13, Narrun 12) bt Mounts Club 27 (Sudhanva P 13, Surathoti N 10) HT: 25-11; Bharath SU 61 (Amit 17, Virat 10) bt Dharwad A 43 (Nagaraj 19) HT: 22-31. **Girls:** Bangalore Vanguards 43 (Aarushi 21) bt Mysore A 35 (Niriksha 13) HT: 15-14; PPC 31 (Harshitha 20) bt Dharwad B 17 HT: 10-10; Hebbal BC 28 (Shruthi 17) bt Mysore B 18 HT: 14-11; Beagles BC 55 (Ayra 22, Anidhya 10) bt Bangalore Sporting 12 HT: 28-4; Viveks SC 41 (Anantha 10, Shreshta 9) bt BCYA 9, HT: 24-4.

— Jia Khosla

Rivansh powers Engrades

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Engrades Cricket Club rode on Rivansh Mohapatra's six-wicket haul (6/9) to register an eight-wicket win over Chintamani Sports Association in the KSCA U-16 inter-club tournament here recently. Chintamani, who opted to bat, didn't get going with the Engrades bowlers striking in quick succession.

They folded up for a paltry 94. Rivansh added to Chintamani's tough situation. The left-arm spinner was in fine form. He also picked up the key wicket of Chintamani captain Ruhaan Shaikh, who top-scored with 22. Pratyush Reddy chipped in with two goals. Engrades overhauled the target in 14 overs.

Brief scores: Chintamani SA: 94 in 32.1 overs (Rivansh Mohapatra 6-9) lost to **Engrades CC: 97/2 in 14 overs** (Samvit Shastri 34, Sriganesh M 32).

Yankees CC: 253 in 42.5 overs (Miraan Mahajan 82, Advik Srinivas 56; Syed Hussaini 4-32) bt **Jayanagar Cricketers: 185 in 37 overs** (Mohammed Nihan 29, Syed Hussaini 66, Pranjal Kumar 29; Shrevin Das 3-36, Advik Srinivas 4-29). **Mount Joy CC: 148 in 38.3 overs** (Avik Jha 45, Rudraraj Das 30; Ibrahim Khan 4-24) lost to **Jawans CC: 151/4 in 34 overs** (Kanishk Reddy 64, RK

U-16 CRICKET

Jishnu Singh 29; Avik Jha 2-16). **City Gymkhana: 355/4 in 50 overs** (Pushkar S 39, Arnav Manchale 141 (147b; 17x4), Siddharth HS 87, Vedant Shaurya 53 n.o; Nikith Harsha 2-56) bt **Wilson Garden CC: 82 in 27.2 overs** (Tejas Sudhindra Bhat 3-15, Hemanth Chandra Shekar 5-17). **Sangam CA: 86 in 21.4 overs** (Vinjamuri Rushyanth 5-31, Lakshmi Sai Nihal 3-20) lost to **Social Cricketers: 89/3 in 15.1 overs** (Athreya Bhat 51 n.o; Roopesh Gowda 2-16). **Sir Syed Cricketers: 154 in 47.3 overs** (Suraj Kumar 46, Samhith Dixit 39; Vishal Reddy 3-17, Sanchith Krishna 5-35) lost to **Palar SC, Kolar: 156/5 in 30.2 overs** (Chayaank Pradeep 30, Bhofinn Sanjeevareddy 33 n.o; Syed Abbas 3-38).

Bangalore United CC (1): 303 in 47.4 overs (SM Bhavith 51, Aarav Bajaj 31, Amol Pai 36, Vijay Hanumanthappa 64; Thaman Sai 2-36, Parthiv Kashyap 2-20) bt **Freelancers CC: 172 in 41.3 overs** (Nipun Devaiah 65, Thaman Sai 42; SM Bhavith 5-19).

Whirlwind Cricketers: 265/9 in 50 overs (Suyog Gowda 91, Sidharth Nayaka 39, Saket Chandramouli 38 n.o; Tejas Mukund 3-48) bt **Bangalore Occasionals: 189/8 in 50 overs** (Diyan Afsar 41, Deveshwar Reddy 32, Tejas Mukund 27 n.o; Bhuvan Gowda 3-44). **Neptune CC: 163/8 in 50 overs** (Srinath Seshadri 54, Srijesh Parthiban 40; Jeevan 3-29, M Neeraj 4-22) lost to **Rajajinagar Cricketers: 164/2 in 22.4 overs** (Prabhav Pydah 79 n.o., Debraj Nandi 31) **Jawahar SC (1): 267 in 49.4 overs** (Amey 31, Cheran Tej Raju 135 (130b; 17x4; 2x6), Ayush YS 32; Rutwik Mesta 3-51, Chirag A 3-40) bt **Jawahar SC (2): 142 in 34.1 overs** (Nikhil Chethan 54; Ayush YS 4-44, M Shreyas 3-19). **Johnson CC: 175 in 39.1 overs** (Divyam Kumawat 46; Mohammed Owais 2-25, Hruday Haran S 2-27, Harshith Raja 2-28) lost to **South End SC: 176/7 in 29.3 overs** (Arya Naveen 46; Rajdeep Banerjee 3-43).

TIMES NATION

Burdwan homes go without help as maid is BJP candidate

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Guskara: For the family members of Platilal Patra, 37-year-old **Kalita Majhi** is not merely a house help who has worked in their home for over two decades. "She is like our daughter, and she addresses me as Baba," he says. The family is now struggling in her absence, as Kalita is the BJP candidate from Ausgram.

For the Patras, Kalita is an integral member of the family. Every day, she used to arrive at 7am and work till 11am or later. Without her, the family is finding it difficult to cope.

Patra said Kalita continued working even after she was declared a candidate. She had a tough time managing cleaning, dusting and washing before heading out for poll campaigns. "We asked her to concentrate on the campaign. She left us a substitute worker. Even then, we are struggling," Patra says.

Patra's daughter Priyanka said, "Kalita-di used to take care of my kid. Now, my mother and I are doing it." Priyanka said her mother is unwell and feels unsettled as she depended on Kalita-di. "But we are managing somehow. We hope she will be our MLA."

Kalita is in high demand as a domestic worker in Patra Para. Tapas De, another employer, described her as honest, reliable and hard-working. "When my name was announced, I was working in two houses as a domestic help and earning Rs 4,500 per month. I wake up at 5am and start work immediately. My mother-in-law helps with cooking so I can manage my job," Kalita said.

Kalita is the youngest of seven sisters. She married in 2006 and began working shortly after. During her campaign, she focused on anti-corruption pledge and women's empowerment.

CAPF visits mayor house at midnight

Saikat.Ray@timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) jawans, led by a commandant, knocked on the doors of Kolkata mayor **Firhad Hakim** well past Monday midnight for an interaction on the second phase of election scheduled on Wednesday.

The meeting proved "uncomfortable" for the mayor who kept asking for the purpose of the unscheduled visit.

The visiting officer reportedly advised Hakim to refrain from intimidation of voters, else face consequences. Hakim repeatedly tried to clear the air about intimidation and said it was not his job as a candidate for Kolkata Port seat to get involved in intimidation. But the officer reportedly told him that he would be kept under vigil. A source said, the conversation lasted 20 minutes.

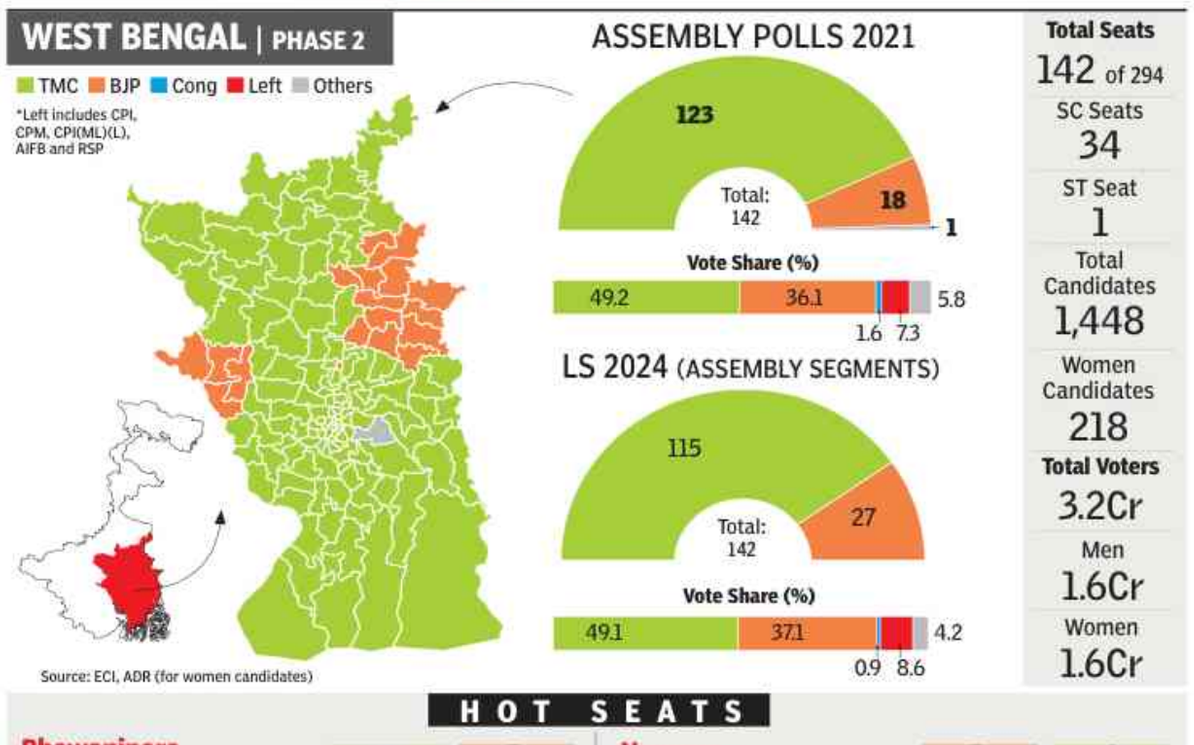
Later, taking to reporters, Hakim burst into anger and asked if the CAPF officials had the authority to reach a candidate's home at midnight and harass him or her.

"I have never seen such action during any election... I strongly condemn this," Hakim said.

CAPF sources said, "It was a routine drill where we asked contestants to follow the law. There was no targeted knocking on the door of Hakim."

Dismissing the allegation, CEO Manoj Agarwal said no formal complaint had been lodged. "Since they went late at night, they must have informed in advance," he added.

This newspaper is published by Manjeet Singh Dhami from Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., Elevy Chancery Building, 1st, 2nd and 4th Floor, 135, Residency Road, Shanthala Nagar, Bengaluru – 560025 (Phones: Office: EPABX- 080-42200000, Editorial: 080-46787878) on behalf of Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., edited by Neelam Raaj and printed by Sekar Sat Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560099 (Ph: 080-22893999). Regd office: Dr. D.N. Road, Mumbai - 400 001. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.
REGD. NO. CPMG/KA/GPO-31/2003-05, RNI NO. 45466/85



HOT SEATS

Bhowanipore

CM Banerjee, whose residence falls within this constituency, has won this seat since 2011. Facing her this time is Adhikari, BJP's leader of opposition. It's a repeat of the 2021 battle when Banerjee had contested from Nandigram, Adhikari's home turf, losing to her one-time loyalist by 1,956 votes (she later won a bypoll from Bhowanipore). In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, TMC dominated the assembly segment, but BJP fared strongly in five wards, securing leads in three, and narrowed TMC's victory margin. After SIR, Banerjee said an initial 44,000 names had been removed from the seat of 2.6 lakh voters. Bhowanipore has a diverse electorate, including a significant percentage of non-Bengali and minority voters.

Past Winners: 2011, 2016, 2021 (TMC)

Noapara

The fight for this seat underlines the larger TMC-BJP battle for the industrial belt that borders the Kolkata suburb of Barrackpore. For BJP strongman Arjun Singh, it's a desperate bid to remain politically relevant. Singh switched from TMC to BJP ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha polls before returning to TMC in 2022. He went back to BJP ahead of the 2024 polls, but lost to TMC heavyweight Partha Bhowmick. This time, Singh has claimed he's "200% assured of victory", as his TMC opponent — youth leader Trinankur Bhattacharya, head of the party's student cell — is not "mature enough". TMC's choice of candidate is seen as an attempt by the party to refresh its image.

Past Winners: 2011 (TMC), 2016 (Cong), 2021 (TMC)

Tollygunge

TMC heavyweight Aroop Biswas, a four-time MLA, is pitching himself himself as the architect of urban renewal in the constituency, pointing to its rapid metamorphosis. He talks of 24 new bridges and the transformation of "dreaded alleys" into modern streets. BJP's Adhikari is challenging this narrative with a grim picture of "internal decay". She claims that beneath the glossy roads lies a neglected constituency where citizens live under plastic sheets and face civic decay. She also claims that Biswas and his brothers' "hegemony" has stifled the Bengal film industry, leaving iconic studios in ruins.

Past Winners: 2011, 2016, 2021 (TMC)

Rashbehari

TMC hasn't lost this formidable bastion since the 1998 byelections. Kumar will be banking on his 26-year political career with supporters citing infrastructure works in slums, specifically on improvements in drainage and drinking water supply. The campaign of BJP's Dasgupta, journalist and former Rajya Sabha member, is focusing on corruption after a 15-hour IT raid at Kumar's residence. Dasgupta, also a Padma Bhushan awardee, has reached out to voters in high-rises and housing complexes and sought to counter the "outsider" label — though he maintains a house in the constituency.

Past Winners: 2011, 2016, 2021 (TMC)

Bagdah

The battle in this Matua-dominated seat features members of the influential Thakurbari family. Soma Thakur, wife of Union minister and BJP MP Shantanu Thakur, is up against sitting MLA Madhuparna, Shantanu's cousin. In 2021, BJP's Biswajit Das won the seat, but later defected to TMC. Madhuparna won this seat in the bypoll that followed. The chief concern here is deletion under SIR of voters of Matua community — a Hindu group with origins in present-day Bangladesh. Soma Thakur has called these exclusions "temporary", while Madhuparna is banking on her previous victory margin of over 33,000 votes.

Past Winners: 2011 (TMC), 2016 (Cong), 2021 (TMC)

Tribunals restore 1,468 votes in Bengal, delete 6

3.2Cr Voters To Cast Ballot In 142 Seats Today

Kaushik.Pradhan @timesofindia.com

Kolkata: Supreme Court-mandated appellate tribunals hearing voter deletions during EC's SIR of electoral rolls in West Bengal restored voting rights of 1,468 people before Wednesday's second phase of polls, taking total reinstatements across two rounds in the state to 1,607, officials said on Tuesday.

Deletions in second phase stood at six, pushing cumulative removals by tribunals to 14. The six whose names were removed can approach Calcutta HC or SC for relief, EC sources said. Before the first leg on April 23, 139 people had their franchise restored. The 115:1 ratio of restorations to deletions has sharpened scrutiny of the exercise.

SIR has cut Bengal's electorate from 7.6 crore to 6.82 crore. Officials attributed

BATTLEGROUND WEST BENGAL

many deletions to dead, absent or shifted voters across 294 seats. The roll revision disenfranchised 27 lakh people under the "logical discrepancy" clause — ranging from spelling errors to surname mismatches and atypical guardianship records during judicial adjudication.

"The tribunals included 1,468 voters who were deleted during the adjudication process and excluded six whom judicial officials had earlier included during adjudication. All 1,468 voters can cast their votes on Wednesday," Bengal CEO Manoj Agarwal said.

EC sources said those whose rights were upheld have been informed. A public list carries electors' names, EPIC details, part and serial numbers, districts, assembly constituencies, and booth-level officers' contacts. Kolkata South recorded the highest inclusions at 677, followed by Kolkata North with 596. Other additions were Howrah 77, Nadia 39, North 24 Parganas 34, South 24 Parganas 30, East Burdwan 8 and Hooghly 7.

After the latest inclusions, 142 constituencies voting on Wednesday will have over 3.2 crore electors, EC said.

RIGHT RESTORED

Electoral dist	Inclusion
Kolkata South	677
Kolkata North	596
Howrah	77
Nadia	39
North 24 Pgns	34
South 24 Pgns	30
East Burdwan	8
Hooghly	7

In Kolkata, 55 nuns rejoin poll rolls

Court-mandated appellate tribunals cleared 55 nuns of Missionaries of Charity for inclusion in Bengal's electoral rolls, reversing earlier deletions after appeals to EC. "They will vote Wednesday. We had help from RS MP Derek O'Brien... We are also grateful to EC," a sister at Mother House said Tuesday.

More than 120 sisters, all voters in Chowringhee, were called for hearings as many were not mapped to previous SIR rolls or could not show linkages. "Nuns provided passport, PAN, Aadhaar, church certificates. Many lacked parents' documents or birth certificates, making linkage difficult. Names also change after embracing sisterhood," an official said, underscoring documentation hurdles.

— Dipawali Mitra

Brown & white fat: How to activate one, lose the other

Storage of fat is different in Indians. This makes our organs vulnerable to inflammation

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When it comes to fat, there's the good, and the bad. For Indians, it can also get a little ugly. A couple of years ago, researchers at University of Glasgow set out to study the pot belly. They overfed 14 South Asians and 14 white Europeans the same diet, and then tracked what happened next.

Both groups gained weight, both ended up with pot bellies. On the surface, there wasn't much difference. But the researchers found that the Europeans stored fat under the skin in the abdominal wall. The South Asians had little subcutaneous abdominal fat but had piled on visceral or 'ectopic' fat in the liver, muscles and blood vessels. Published in 2024 in Nature Metabolism, the GlasVEGAS study didn't just decode the pot belly, it also explained why Indians develop metabolic disease earlier.

"Fat is an endocrine organ. It produces hormones that affect metabolism. So, two people with the same weight can have very different health profiles depending on fat distribution," says Bengaluru-based nutritionist Ryan Fernando. Tools such as DEXA (an imaging test that measures body fat and muscle distribution) reveal visceral and subcutaneous fat, while genetics and gut microbiome also influence how fat is stored and used. "If more Indians understood fat composition, not just weight, we could tackle obesity more effectively," Fernando adds.

"It's now clear that it is not just how much fat you have, it's where it goes and how it behaves," says diabetologist Dr V Mohan of Madras Diabetes Research Foundation in Chennai, who has been researching the effects of fat on metabolism. "The difference lies in the number of adipocytes or fat cells. Europeans have plenty of adipocytes along the abdominal wall, so excess fat is stored beneath the skin. Genetic studies confirm that South Asians, especially Indians, have fewer adipocytes under the skin, and therefore the fat goes deeper into the body to be stored around organs." The GlasVEGAS researchers called it the "fat overflow hypothesis".

White fat
Stored under skin & around vital organs
Tips body into chronic inflammation, which is a pathway to diabetes, heart disease and even some cancers
Brown fat
Stored in neck, upper chest, collarbone & upper back
Reduces inflammation, improves insulin sensitivity, blood sugar control & heart health, helps reduce white fat
HOW TO BRING GOOD FAT BACK
■ Aerobic exercise: Walking fast, jogging or cycling helps release irisin, a hormone produced by skeletal muscle cells, that tells white fat to behave more like brown fat and help body burn more energy
■ Cold water swimming: By itself, swimming doesn't really activate brown fat, but is thought to do so in cold water
■ Resistance training: Squats and deadlifts increase adrenaline and noradrenaline hormones, known to stimulate brown fat
■ Japanese walking method: Interval walking training, where one alternates between fast and slow walking, activates brown fat, raises metabolic rate and improves heart health
■ Fat-burning foods: Capsaicin (in chilli), green tea, curcumin (in turmeric), Omega-3 (fish oil, flaxseed), and ursolic acid (apple skin, tulsi, rosemary) help white fat take on brown fat characteristics

FAT, BAT, WAT?

There are two types of fat — white fat or white adipose tissue (WAT) stored under the skin and around visceral organs, and brown fat or brown adipose tissue (BAT) stored in the neck, upper chest, collarbone area and upper back.

The two behave differently. "White fat is the storage fat most people are familiar with — the kind that expands with excess calories and contributes to metabolic issues when it becomes excessive, especially around the organs," says Fernando. Brown fat is almost the opposite, he adds. "It is metabolically active, rich in mitochondria and burns calories, improves insulin sensitivity, blood sugar control and heart health, and helps reduce white fat."

White fat, says Dr Mohan, produces harmful cytokines (signalling proteins) that tip the body into chronic inflammation, leading to diabetes, heart disease and even some cancers. "It's because the level of adiponectin, one of the only good hormones that fat cells release, is higher in brown fat and lower in white fat." The higher the adiponectin levels (can be measured through blood tests), the better for the body. "Indians are known to have lower levels, which may explain their susceptibility to visceral adiposity, Type 2 diabetes, and premature heart disease," he adds.

CROSS-TALKING ORGANS

White fat conversion to brown fat is being studied in rodents to target obesity, a process referred to as 'beiging'. "But it hasn't been fully proved in humans yet," says Naresh C Bal of the School of Biotechnology at Orissa's KIIT University, who is studying white to brown fat transition.

"Researchers are working on how to take white fat, convert it to brown or beige in the lab, and reintroduce it into the body," says Bal, who works on understanding the mechanisms of inter-organ cross-talk, especially between skeletal muscle and white/brown fat. "While we know that skeletal muscle is under the control of the brain, the cross-talk between muscle and adipose tissue has not been studied in as much detail. Adipose tissue was seen as a storage organ, brown fat as a heat-producing centre, and skeletal muscle as a locomotory organ. Now, we want to know how they communicate with each other."

Doctors believe some of the new weight-loss GLP-1 drugs may also work by decreasing the harmful white fat and increasing brown fat. Bal says his lab at KIIT is currently patenting a naturally derived black pepper compound that activates brown fat. "KIIT has already patented an analogue of capsaicin found in chillies that activates skeletal muscle to counter Type 2 diabetes." Exercise, adds Bal, can also induce browning. Mumbai-based fitness trainer Bhavna Harchandrai says even alternating between a fast and a slow walk, like the Japanese do, could activate brown fat.

Dr Natarajan Ganesan, assistant professor at the College of Osteopathic Medicine, New York Institute of Technology, who studies the "thermodynamic signature" of adipose tissue, says the body doesn't burn fat randomly. "Fat quality matters as much as quantity. Mono- and di-unsaturated fats (olive oil or nuts) are more efficient. They are burned more readily," he says. "By focusing on a diverse intake of healthy fats, you ensure your body is stocked with items that are easy for your metabolism to use when needed."

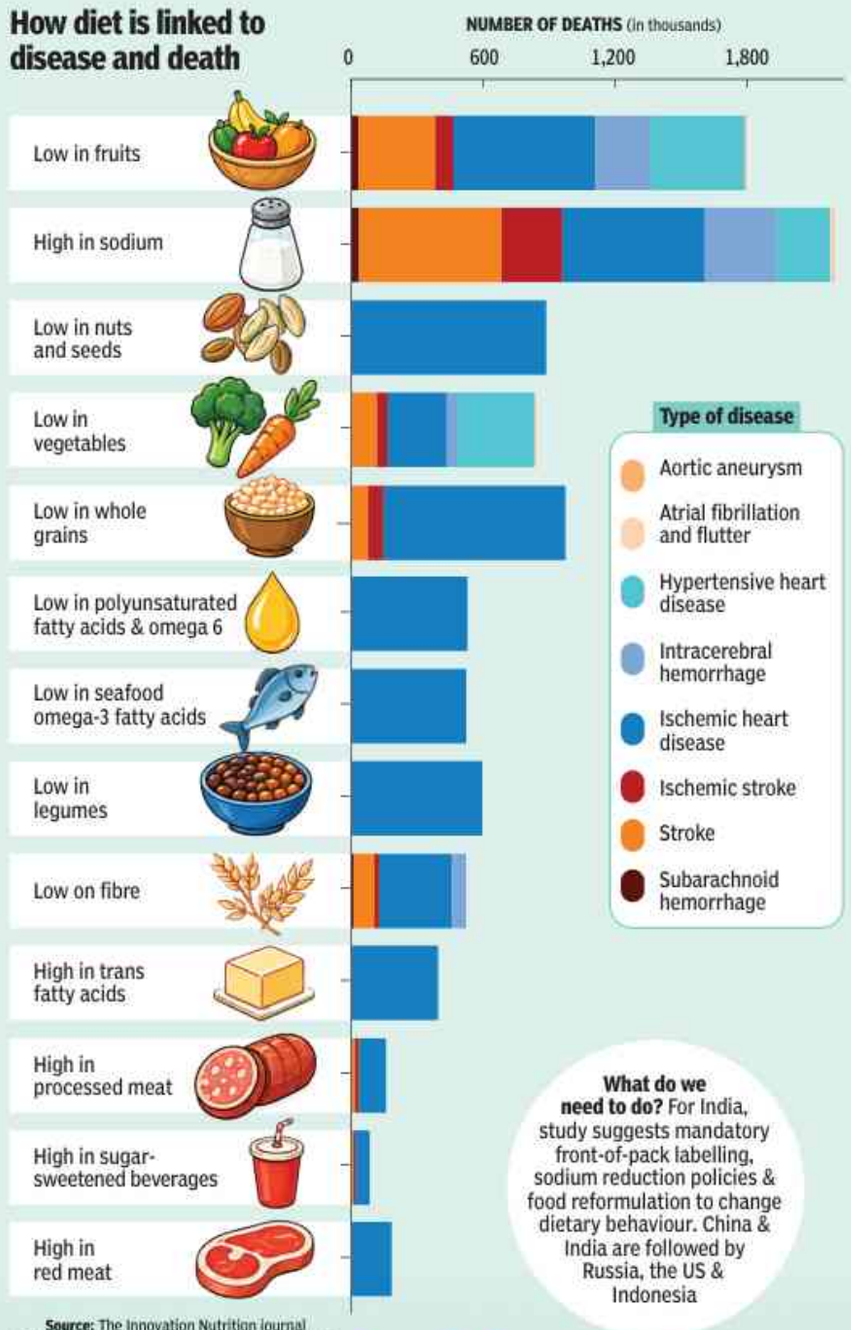
TRUST THE INDIAN DIET

Ultra-processed foods, excess sugar and sedentary living also push the body towards building greater white fat stores. Foods such as chilli, turmeric, ginger, green tea and apple skin contain compounds that support activation of brown fat, says Fernando. "Traditional Indian diets naturally included many of these foods, but modern living has moved us away from many of them."

India is already seeing the consequences. Unicef's child nutrition report 2025 estimates more than 27 million Indian children and adolescents could be living with obesity by 2030, 11% of the global burden. National Family Health Survey data shows adult obesity has increased 91% among women and 146% among men in the past couple of decades.

HEART'S BIGGEST ENEMY: SALT

A study based on data from 204 countries and published in The Innovation Nutrition journal found that in 2023 alone, 5.9 million people worldwide died because of diet-related heart disease. The two countries that saw most of these deaths were China (1.36 million) and India (1.1 million). The study identified three main causes — high salt intake, diet low on fruits, and lacking in whole grains


How diet is linked to disease and death
NUMBER OF DEATHS (in thousands)
0
600
1,200
1,800
Low in fruits
High in sodium
Low in nuts and seeds
Low in vegetables
Low in whole grains
Low in polyunsaturated fatty acids & omega 6
Low in seafood omega-3 fatty acids
Low in legumes
Low on fibre
High in trans fatty acids
High in processed meat
High in sugar-sweetened beverages
High in red meat
Type of disease
Aortic aneurysm
Atrial fibrillation and flutter
Hypertensive heart disease
Intracerebral hemorrhage
Ischemic heart disease
Ischemic stroke
Stroke
Subarachnoid hemorrhage
What do we need to do? For India, study suggests mandatory front-of-pack labelling, sodium reduction policies & food reformulation to change dietary behaviour. China & India are followed by Russia, the US & Indonesia
Source: The Innovation Nutrition journal
For the whole study, see www.the-innovation.org

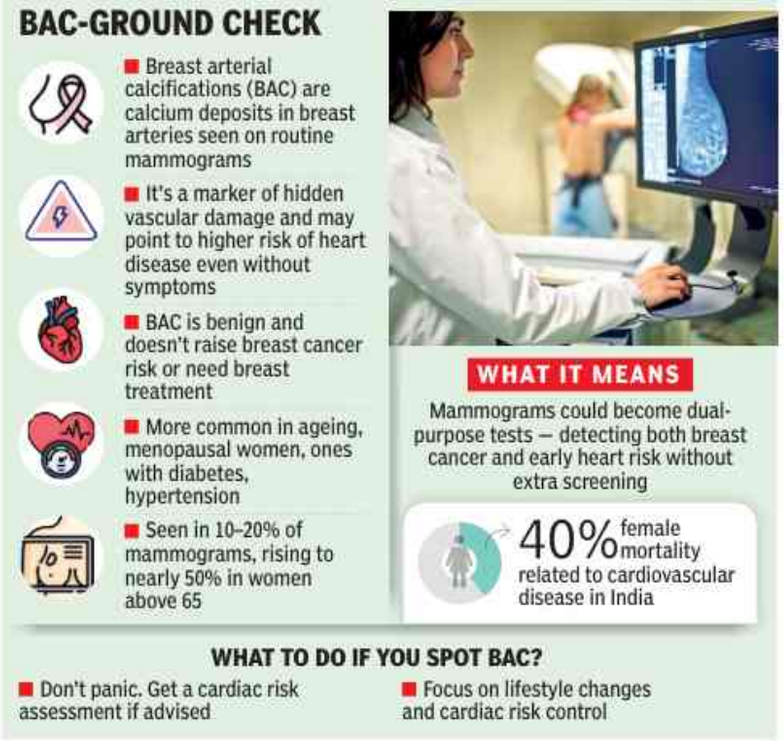
Mammograms are helping docs spot heart disease risk early

By detecting calcium deposits in breast arteries, cancer screening tool is enabling preventive treatment and stopping cardiac episodes

Lata.Mishra@timesofindia.com

Routine mammograms have long been used to detect breast cancer early, but can they also reveal hidden heart disease risks in women? Doctors say a mammogram can pinpoint breast arterial calcifications (BAC) — calcium deposits in breast arteries that are now recognised as markers of underlying vascular damage that can raise cardiovascular risks.

A 52-year-old woman from Mumbai recently underwent routine screening mammogram and, while her breast tissue appeared normal, the radiologist noted clear BAC. "She had no known history of heart disease but had been living with diabetes for nearly seven years. A cardiac evaluation and further tests revealed abnormal cholesterol levels and early signs of coronary artery narrowing," says Dr Brajesh Kumar Kunwar, senior consultant interventional cardiologist at Apollo Hospitals, Navi Mumbai who treated her.


BAC-GROUND CHECK
■ Breast arterial calcifications (BAC) are calcium deposits in breast arteries seen on routine mammograms
■ It's a marker of hidden vascular damage and may point to higher risk of heart disease even without symptoms
■ BAC is benign and doesn't raise breast cancer risk or need breast treatment
■ More common in ageing, menopausal women, ones with diabetes, hypertension
■ Seen in 10–20% of mammograms, rising to nearly 50% in women above 65
WHAT IT MEANS
Mammograms could become dual-purpose tests — detecting both breast cancer and early heart risk without extra screening
40% female mortality related to cardiovascular disease in India
WHAT TO DO IF YOU SPOT BAC?
■ Don't panic. Get a cardiac risk assessment if advised
■ Focus on lifestyle changes and cardiac risk control

Surrogate screening

Dr Kunwar says BAC should be considered a surrogate marker of atherosclerosis (plaque buildup in artery walls). "The patient had never had chest pain or other warning symptoms. But the mammogram finding prompted early intervention, including drugs, lifestyle changes, and stricter diabetes control — potentially preventing a future heart attack."

These calcium deposits reflect blood vessel changes linked to ageing, diabetes, hypertension, and metabolic disorders, and may signal a higher likelihood of heart disease even in women without symptoms. Experts emphasise BAC doesn't raise breast cancer risk or require breast-specific treatment, but serves as an indicator for heart disease, allowing preventive care.

ICMR recommends mammography for women aged 40 and above every two years, but earlier for those at higher risk. With more women in India opting for breast cancer screening, doctors are finding BAC more frequently. "We are seeing such calcifications in 10-20% of women undergoing mammography," says Dr Tushar Jadhav, a consultant surgical oncologist (breast) associated with multiple Mumbai hospitals. "If BAC is seen in 9-16% of women aged 40-65, it rises to nearly 50% in those above 65. It's particularly common among post-menopausal women, those with diabetes, hypertension, or chronic kidney disease," he adds.

TOI HealthTech

Mammogram to heart surgery

Emerging global research also reflects what doctors are seeing in clinical practice. Ongoing research at Mount Sinai Health System in New York looking at 15,000 women also links BAC on mammograms to heart disease risk. NBC News reports that in one striking case that's part of the study, the mammogram of a 67-year-old woman with no heart disease symptoms revealed BAC, which later uncovered severe multi-vessel coronary artery disease (CAD) — leading to life-saving quintuple bypass surgery. Doctors involved in the study said the mammogram finding was the only reason she underwent additional heart testing, stressing how these often-overlooked calcium deposits can serve as an early warning sign.

A 2025 research published in the journal, Heart, analysed mammograms of over 49,000 women using an artificial intelligence (AI) algorithm, which was able to predict major cardiovascular events — including heart attacks, strokes, and heart failure — with accuracy comparable to leading clinical risk prediction models.

Advanced AI is enabling more precise analysis of mammograms by detecting subtle vascular patterns that may not be visible to the human eye. "This technology also makes it feasible to conduct large-scale population studies in India to better understand the link between BAC and cardiovascular risk. However, AI-based risk assessment tools must be validated through clinical studies in collaboration with cardiologists," says Dr Ashutosh Kothari, a breast cancer surgeon at Sir H N Reliance Foundation Hospital.

Dr Rahul Gupta, a cardiologist at Gleneagles hospital, points out that the mechanisms underlying BAC and CAD are related but not identical. "However, both share common risk factors. BAC should be viewed as a marker of systemic vascular ageing and underlying cardiovascular risk, even though it does not necessarily indicate a coronary artery blockage. It should be viewed as a risk indicator, not a diagnosis. Not every woman with BAC needs advanced cardiac testing," adds Dr Gupta.

Dr Kothari stresses on an individualised approach, saying, "Breast calcifications need to be assessed keeping in mind pre-existing conditions such as diabetes, blood pressure and other lifestyle factors, as well as symptoms of fatigue, breathlessness, intolerance to exercise and exertion."

BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 101 BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 32 | PRICE ₹5

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"Doping has become a cancer in my country...": Marathon record-breaker Sabastian Sawe says he underwent strict testing regime before smashing 2-hr barrier

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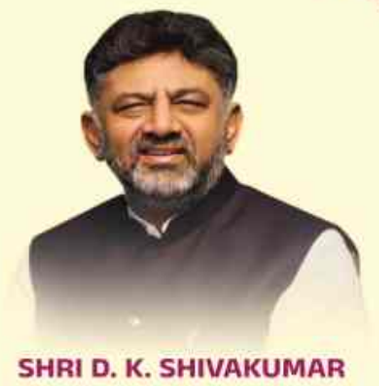

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2nd PUC Exam-1
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"SOMETIMES IF YOU ARE PERFORMING WELL, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE RESULT OR WICKET, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER. IF YOU ARE BOWLING WELL AND SOMEONE IS TAKING A WICKET FROM THE OTHER END, THAT'S WHAT MATTERS IN THE END."
—Bhuvneshwar Kumar | RCB seamer

Ferreira scripts Royals heist

PBKS Taste First Defeat As RR Chase Down 223 With Four Balls To Spare

Hindol.Basu@timesofindia.com

New Chandigarh: In the end, it came down to two men who refused to read from anyone else's script — Shubham Dubey, walking in as an 'impact sub' with Rajasthan Royals' chase wobbling, and Donovan Ferreira, who took one look at what Dubey was doing and decided he wanted a piece of it too.

Between them, an unbroken 77-run stand dramatically turned the match in favour of Rajasthan Royals, who won by six wickets at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday. It was Punjab's first defeat of IPL-2026. It had to come eventually, but it will hurt Shreyas Iyer & Co. a little more because they had done so much right.

In a chase of 223, it began with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (43 off 16 balls; 3x4, 5x6) doing what he does with extraordinary regularity these days. Two defences to start, and then the 15-year-old was at it again.

Arshdeep Singh went for a six and two boundaries in the first over. Lockie Ferguson, bowling at serious pace, was treated with utter disdain as Sooryavanshi struck the Kiwi fast bowler for two sixes and a boundary, one of those sixes clearing the ropes faster than the ball had arrived.

Arshdeep had the last laugh with a low full toss that Sooryavanshi skied in his eagerness to clear the boundary again. Yashasvi Jaiswal (51 off 27 balls; 7x4, 1x6) assumed command thereafter and was equally ruthless. Jaiswal has been in irresistible touch this IPL and he showed why, motoring Rajasthan to 84/1 at the end of the Powerplay. The target, at that stage, was well within reach. And then Punjab's spinners arrived and the match tilted once again.

Nitin Sharma

RESCUE ACT: Rajasthan Royals' Donovan Ferreira bats against Punjab

400 runs at 44.44, including a hundred and two fifties, in nine innings by Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, making him the highest scorer in this IPL. He is the first batter to score 400+ runs this season.

3 Rajasthan Royals have defeated Punjab Kings in all three IPL games played in New Chandigarh — by 3 wickets on April 13, 2024, by 50 runs on April 5, 2025 and by 6 wickets on April 28, 2026.

Harpreet Brar was disciplined and gave little away, building pressure with the kind of sustained accuracy that forces mistakes. Yuzvendra Chahal, from the other end, was his partner in crime. Chahal removed Dhruv Jurel, Jaiswal and Royals skipper Riyan Parag to finish with figures of 3/36.

'Impact sub' Dubey walked in when the asking rate was climbing and nerves were beginning to fray. He did not flinch. His 31 not out off 12 balls (3x4, 2x6) was as composed as it was brutal. The moment Dubey started timing it, Ferreira found another gear entirely. What followed was a hitting masterclass as Ferreira (52* off 26 balls; 6x4, 3x6) finished the match in style with a six.

Earlier, Punjab Kings showed why their batting carries a sense of inevitability these days. Not merely about the runs, but the manner in which they execute the task at hand. It is brisk, confident and increasingly dismissive of reputation. Asked to bat first, Punjab finished with 222/4. The total wouldn't have been possible without Marcus Stoinis (62* off 22 balls; 4x4, 6x6). By the time Stoinis went full throttle, Rajasthan's plans had frayed. The final overs saw him power Punjab past the point of a good total into something far more daunting, although it still wasn't enough in the end.

SCOREBOARD

PBKS: P Singh c Parag b Punja 59, P Arya c Burger b Archer 29, C Connolly c Ferreira b Punja 30, S Iyer c Jurel b Burger 30, M Stoinis not out 62, S Shedge not out 3; **Extras (b4, lb4, w1): 9; Total (4 wkts, 20 ovrs): 222; FoW:** 1-37, 2-96, 3-144, 4-181; **Bowling:** Archer 4-0-40-1, Burger 4-0-59-1, Brijesh 4-0-42-0, Punja 4-0-41-2, Jadeja 4-0-32-0.

RR: Y Jaiswal c Shedge b Chahal 51, V Sooryavanshi c Iyer b Arshdeep 43, D Jurel c Jansen b Chahal 16, R Parag c Shedge b Chahal 29, D Ferreira not out 52, S Dubey not out 31; **Extras (b1, w4, nb1): 6; Total (4 wkts, 19.2 ovrs): 228; FoW:** 1-51, 2-105, 3-123, 4-151; **Bowling:** Arshdeep 4-0-68-1, Ferguson 4-0-57-0, Jansen 3.2-0-41-0, Brar 4-0-25-0, Chahal 4-0-36-3.

Result: PBKS won by 6 wickets.

51 Jaiswal's fifth fifty vs PBKS is his 18th in the IPL. With 20 innings of 50+ (2 tons and 18 fifties), he is the third batter to register 20 or more innings of fifty+ for RR in the IPL. The first two are Jos Buttler (7 hundreds and 18 fifties) and Sanju Samson (2 tins and 23 fifties.

3/26 Yuzvendra Chahal has recorded his second best bowling performance vs RR in the IPL behind the 3/24 in Abu Dhabi on October 3, 2020.

37 Sixes hit by Vaibhav Sooryavanshi in nine innings, the most by a batter in this IPL.

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
PBKS	8	6	1	1	1.043	13
RCB	8	6	2	0	1.919	12
RR	9	6	3	0	0.617	12
SRH	8	5	3	0	0.815	10
GT	8	4	4	0	-0.475	8
CSK	8	3	5	0	-0.121	6
DC	8	3	5	0	-1.060	6
KKR	8	2	5	1	-0.751	5
MI	7	2	5	0	-0.736	4
LSG	8	2	6	0	-1.106	4

MI seek revival as they take on SRH

Gaurav.Gupta@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: Staring down the barrel in yet another testing IPL season, the Mumbai Indians find themselves in near must-win territory when they take on an on-song Sunrisers Hyderabad at the Wankhede Stadium on Wednesday night.

With five defeats from their first seven matches, MI are languishing ninth on the table with just four points and an abysmal net run-rate of -0.736. Another setback could all but extinguish their playoff hopes, and that, with almost half the tournament still to be played, underlines just how dire the situation is for the five-time champions.

The sense of alarm deepened after MI's previous outing at the Wankhede, where they suffered their heaviest defeat, by 103 runs vs arch-rivals Chennai Super Kings. In the immediate aftermath, the Hardik Pandya-led squad headed to Jamnagar for a brief two-day break, hoping space away from the spotlight would help arrest the slide.

Compounding MI's uncertainty is the question mark over Rohit Sharma's availability. The former India captain has missed the last three matches with a hamstring injury and remains a doubtful starter. "Rohit continues to progress. Any call on his availability will be taken at the toss tomorrow," an MI spokesperson said at the pre-match press conference.

While Rohit trained on Sunday after the team's return from Jamnagar, he missed nets on Monday and chose to train late on Tuesday. In his absence, MI handed an IPL debut to Vidarbha batter Danish Malewar, but scores of 0 and 2 from the 22-year-old only underlined the void at the top.

Form, though, hasn't been MI's only concern. On Monday, New Zealand left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner was ruled out of IPL-2026 with a left shoulder injury. Santner, who took 10 wickets last season, has been replaced by South Africa's Keshav Maharaj, but MI may need to look beyond like-for-like swaps. England allrounder Will Jacks remains an option yet to be fully explored.

Batting at No.7 and offering useful off-spin, Jacks was one of the standout performers of the 2026 T20 World Cup in India, winning four Player-of-the-Match awards. However, his late arrival has complicated MI's planning.

WEATHER 29°C

5 Mumbai Indians have won five and lost two out of seven IPL matches contested vs Sunrisers Hyderabad at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai. Their tally includes the last three games — all while chasing — by 8 wickets on May 21, 2023, by 7 wickets on May 6, 2024 and by 4 wickets on April 17, 2025.

2 Two hundreds have been scored for MI vs SRH in the IPL — both at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai — an unbeaten 100 off 47 balls by Cameron Green (his only century in T20) on May 21, 2023 and 102 not out off 51 balls by Suryakumar Yadav on May 6, 2024.

—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

For batters, struggle is real in slightly tough conditions

Having Been Spoon-Fed T20 Belters, They Have Been Unable To Adapt When Needed Most. Should Indian Cricket Be Worried About Success Away From Home?

Arani.Basu@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: India's T20 cricketing prowess is now the envy of the world, especially with the IPL dictating the changing landscape of the format.

India's back-to-back T20 World Cup triumphs, however, were built on an IPL-generated template of logging high scores on batting-friendly pitches. Yet, this season's IPL has sounded a warning which could set off the alarm bells on this approach.

Monday's game at the Ferozeshah Kotla between Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru, in particular, highlighted how batters can surrender timidly when condition are slightly bowler friendly and the likes of Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar are doing bowling duties.

DC were reduced to 8/6 in 3.5 overs and finished the Powerplay with a record IPL low score of 13/6. Somehow they limped to a total of 75.

It's almost against the core marketing ethos of this format to see ball dominate bat, but there have also been some games in Lucknow and Chennai too this season which have been uncomfortable for batters.

Getting to 160 has become an arduous task in Lucknow while the Chennai Super Kings batters were shackled by the likes of Mohammed Siraj, Kagiso Rabada and Jason Holder in Chennai on Sunday.

The surfaces in question have not been minefields. They are regular surfaces with just enough in it for the bowlers to expose the technical deficiencies of batters.

The Indian team has played most of its white-ball cricket in the subcontinent in the last two years. The caravan will now move out, with the ODI World Cup in 2027 slated to be played in South Africa and the next T20 World Cup to be played in Australia and New Zealand in 2028.

Tarun Rawat

RCB's Bhuvneshwar Kumar and teammates celebrate Axar Patel's wicket

It's imperative that the wise men tasked with Indian cricket's planning don't get swayed only by performances in high-scoring matches. Challenging conditions for batters in India are still a rarity in T20 cricket but they serve as unpleasant markers.

"It's important that these low-scoring matches are not discouraged. The curator must not be under pressure if his surface has produced a low-scoring game here and there. The selectors see how batters adapt to challenging conditions. Look at Virat Kohli, how well he batted in similar conditions. I'm sure the selectors have an eye out for that when they plan for the future," former national selector Devang Gandhi said.

It's undeniably a worrying trend. India's recent performances on spicy Australian pitches and turning tracks in India are well documented. These matches aren't just banana peels. They are likely to be the norm when the Indian team hits the road over the next two years.

Delhi Capitals captain Axar Patel put on a brave front after Monday's humiliation and said, "The franchises do hold camps round the year. It's a personal choice for the young uncapped players to decide what drills they would like to do more. But I believe one should focus on technique and the foundation of batting. You can't sustain power-hitting if you don't have a strong foundation."

Since IPL became a 10-team competition, teams have diluted bowling attacks. There are fewer active, established international bowlers and more inexperienced Indian bowlers. "One has to factor that in while judging a batter's season. GT, RR, LSG and RCB look to have comparatively potent attacks. How batters are reacting to these bowlers holds the key since you will not get 250-plus conducive T20 pitches in SENA countries. The planning has to be for the ODI World Cup in South Africa," former India wicketkeeper-turned-broadcaster Deep Dasgupta said.

Franklin flags batter bias in run-heavy IPL

Gaurav Gupta
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Mumbai: For a tournament accustomed to 200-plus totals being both posted and chased with monotonous regularity, what unfolded on Monday night was a striking exception.

DC's collapse against RCB left the cricketing world stunned, including Sunrisers Hyderabad assistant coach James Franklin, whose own team had only recently chased down a daunting 229 against Rajasthan Royals with ease.

"I didn't actually watch last night's game live; I caught up with it later on a scorecard. I couldn't quite believe what I saw," Franklin said at the pre-match press conference on the eve of SRH's clash against MI on Wednesday. "We're so used to seeing 200-plus scores, so to see a scorecard at the complete opposite end of the spectrum was quite amazing."

The former New Zealand left-arm seamer agreed that the balance in the tournament currently appears tilted heavily in favour of batters.

"It'll be interesting to see how this evolves, not just through this tournament but in future IPL editions," Franklin said. "At the moment, things do feel very skewed in the batter's favour. Whether that's because of pitches, the 'impact player' rule or the sheer quality and depth of batting skill sets right now, I'm not sure. Bowling is certainly trying to catch up. So, let's watch that space."

Asked if the high-scoring nature of IPL games had become repetitive or boring, Franklin chose to stay clear of strong opinions. "From my point of view, I'm deeply entrenched in the here and now. As coaches, we deal with what's in front of us. Whether it's boring or not is probably for the viewers and the media to decide," he said.

PTI

Rohit Sharma during training in Mumbai on Tuesday

Batters don't practice enough against hard lengths: Steyn

New Delhi: After Delhi Capitals' collapse on Monday, South African great Dale Steyn said modern batters are not preparing enough for hard lengths, a flaw exposed by Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar in the IPL here on Monday night.

Steyn said batters are not scared anymore but they just do not practice enough for the lengths that the likes of Hazlewood, Bhuvneshwar, Kagiso Rabada and Jofra Archer tend to bowl. "Watching Bhuvi, Hazlewood, throw KG (Rabada) and Archer in there too, there's a genuine fear from batters not because they (are) scared, but they know exactly where these greats are going to bowl. But (they) don't practice enough in that area to have answers," Steyn posted on X.

"The fear is technical skill, (but it is) too deep into the tournament to change now. Watch these bowlers continue to dominate. It's called a hard length for a reason" Steyn added. Former South African batter Herschelle Gibbs said that batters do not charge down the pitch enough against these bowlers to disturb their lengths. "No batter is keen to run at them to get them off their lengths," Gibbs said. PTI

Hesitation, bad luck behind collapse: DC skipper Axar

New Delhi: Skipper Axar Patel attributed Delhi Capitals' dramatic batting collapse against Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a mix of "hesitation" stemming from their previous outing and plain "bad luck".

"I think because of what happened in the last game (against Punjab Kings), there was some hesitation. Other than that, I think it was bad luck. No batter could really settle," Axar said, underlining how the collapse was more circumstantial than structural.

DC had posted 264 against PBKS but could not defend the total in their previous outing. He suggested that the psychological residue of failing to defend in the previous match may have subconsciously impacted the batting approach. Axar also highlighted how the nature of the pitch evolved quickly, catching the batters off guard. While there was appreciable movement early on, the conditions eased out once the new ball lost its sting.

Starc has checked in: Axar also confirmed that Australian pacer Mitchell Starc has joined the squad and will be available for selection after May 1. PTI

NO DEMONS IN PITCH, JUST RCB'S BRILLIANCE: KRUNAL

New Delhi: RCB's Krunal Pandya said the contest against Delhi Capitals was decided as much by skill as by staying "one step ahead" in the mental game.

Krunal underlined that there were no demons in the wicket but just that Bhuvneshwar and Hazlewood were exceptional. "To get six wickets in the Powerplay, you have literally taken the game away from the opponent. The wicket wasn't that bad, but it was pure skill set. That's why they are among the best," Krunal said. PTI

Asiad shooters set for overseas training camp

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New Delhi: India's shooting contingent bound for the upcoming Asian Games will undergo specialised overseas training camps in South Korea and Malaysia as part of their final build-up. According to sources, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has devised a strategic plan to help shooters acclimatise to conditions similar to those expected during the Sept 19-Oct 4 event in Japan's Aichi-Nagoya.

Air pistol and rifle shooters are set to train in Incheon, South Korea while shotgun shooters will likely head to Malaysia.

"The foreign training stint has been designed in such a way to replicate environmental and time-zone conditions comparable to Japan, allowing our shooters to adjust well in advance for the Asiad. The camp will begin on Sept 4 and continue until Sept 15 at both locations. Shooters will travel directly to Japan from there which will also save them time," a source said.

The shooting event at the Games is scheduled to start on Sept 17 and will run through Oct 3. While the South Korea camp is nearly finalised, discussions are underway with the National Shooting Association of Malaysia (NSAM) to book a shooting range for the shotgun shooters.

Before heading overseas, the Indian shooters will participate in their final international competition at the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun in China's Hangzhou from July 20 to 29. This will be followed by a two-week camp from mid-Aug at the Karni Singh Shooting Range (KSSR) here.

India's Uber Cup campaign ends

Manne.Ratnakar
@timesofindia.com

PV Sindhu and Isharani Baruah wasted several opportunities as India's Uber Cup campaign ended with a 0-5 defeat to holders China in Horsens, Denmark on Monday. China and Denmark progressed to the next stage from Group A. While China won all three matches, Denmark won two and lost one, India won one and lost two. The fourth team in Group A, Ukraine, lost all three matches.

The result was more or less clear after India lost 2-3 to Denmark on the first day. In the must-win match against China, India replaced Unnati Hooda and Tanvi Sharma with Isharani Baruah and Devika Sihag in singles. Sindhu squandered an 18-12 lead in the decider to lose 16-21, 21-19, 19-21 to Wang Zhi Yi. The world No. 1 pair of Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning made short of Priya Konjengbam and Shruti Mishra 21-11, 21-8. In a crucial contest, Isharani nearly won the first game before missing a sitter at 20-19 against Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei.

The Chinese world No. 4 did not give another chance and wrapped it up at 22-20, 21-13. Tanisha Crasto and Kavipriya Selvam gave a good account of themselves before losing 10-21, 21-12, 19-21 to Luo Xu Min and Zhang Shu Xian.

Pitted against world No. 97 Xu Weng Jing, Devika lost 21-19, 17-21, 10-21. Former national coach Vimal Kumar said that the Indian girls failed to capitalise on the opportunities they were handed. "Isharani had Chen Yu Fei on the ropes but let her off. Repeatedly leaving shuttles that are landing well inside the baseline and basic errors at the net is not bad luck, it's poor judgement under pressure," Vimal said, adding that it was the same story against Denmark.

"Unnati Hooda and Tanvi Sharma had their chances against Denmark but they didn't take them. At the highest level, you either convert or you exit," he added.

AFP

HARD LUCK: P V Sindhu

Vinesh set for 57kg comeback, fifth weight switch of career

Sabi.Hussain@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Wrestler **Vinesh Phogat** is set for another weight-category change — the fifth switch of her career — as she prepares for a competitive comeback in the 57kg division at the 2026 Senior Open Ranking tournament in Gonda, UP, from May 10-12. The tournament is likely to mark her first competitive appearance in 20 months, following her shock retirement announcement after she was disqualified from the 2024 Paris Olympics final for being 100g overweight. Vinesh reversed her retirement decision in Dec 2025.

The three-day event is a crucial route for wrestlers looking to enter the national camp and stay in contention for the upcoming Asian Games selection trials.

Her move to 57kg is a significant jump, 4kg above her long-time 53kg division and 7kg above the category she wrestled in at Paris. Across her career, Vinesh has shifted weight classes repeatedly because of injuries, changes in categories and stiff domestic competition.

Registration confirmed for ranking tournament

After alleging that she was being blocked from competing at the Gonda meet by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), Vinesh on Tuesday confirmed that she had successfully registered for the tournament.

"My registration was done this morning. I could not complete the registration yesterday as the link was closed. I'm looking forward to competing in my first competition after 20 months," Vinesh said.

TECH **I'D LIKE** TO SEE

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INDIA'S AI TALENT GOES DEEP.

Small-town women show how

Much lower costs and attrition, as also accent conversion tech, are changing BPO dynamics

Shelley Singh

Gengashree Nidhiban, 30, a BTech in information technology from the College of Engineering, Anna University, Chennai, did her internship at Qualcomm in Bengaluru, before taking up a full-time job, helping companies automate tasks using AI. Sathyashree A, 30, BSc in agriculture from Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Cuddalore, went through an intensive AI training on the job and is now working on advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) for autonomous vehicles for a Europe-based automaker. Her colleague Harini M, BE in agriculture from Muthayammal College of Engineering, Rasipuram, also underwent AI training and is helping ensure that auto-checkout stores at global retail outlets work without a hitch.

None of them work out of any of the big poster-cities of hi-tech work, Bengaluru, Gurugram or Hyderabad. Gengashree works from Virudhunagar, about an hour's drive from Madurai in Tamil Nadu, for DesiCrew, a BPO firm that focuses on remote centres. Sathyashree and Harini work in Mallasamudram and Salem respectively, for NextWealth Entrepreneurs, another similar BPO.

"I'm working with the automation teams at DesiCrew. Our job is to identify where AI can help save time."
Gengashree Nidhiban | TEAM LEADER, DESICREW SOLUTIONS

"In this job, I've got a strong platform to learn and grow in AI and ML, fields which are becoming increasingly important in today's world."
Harini M | TRAINEE EXECUTIVE, NEXTWEALTH ENTREPRENEURS

"I'm married with two children and have strong family support for the work I am doing. For a Customer, we are training AI models to understand images, which go on to help improve computer vision."
Sathyashree A | TRAINEE EXECUTIVE, NEXTWEALTH ENTREPRENEURS

"For a retail customer, we are reducing manual effort with automated solutions."
Shrinidhi Bhat | ASSOCIATE MANAGER, DESICREW SOLUTIONS

From Support Centres to Key Units

For years, remote BPOs were seen as low-cost support units, doing basic data entry or back-office work for large urban centres. That is changing. As AI automates routine work in big city BPOs, smaller centres in India's hinterland are finding a new role: enabling AI itself. JK Manivannan, CEO of DesiCrew Solutions, says Covid opened up the "work-from-anywhere" model, while AI created a level playing field for all.

The remote talent today annotates data, validates AI models, works on computer vision, trains language systems, processes voice datasets, tests AI outputs and helps companies turn automation into real business workflows. Their customers are the likes of Google, Toyota, Pfizer, Disney Hotstar and AT&T.

DesiCrew has around 2,000 employees across centres in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, with project-based work extending to nearly 20 states for language and voice datasets. Around 60% of its business comes from global clients and 40% from Indian customers. About 70% of its workforce is women. NextWealth Entrepreneurs, which started about 13 years ago, has 11 centres, including in Hubballi, Mysuru, Puducherry, Bhilai in Chhattisgarh), and Jaipur & Udaipur in Rajasthan.

"Today, you can work from anywhere. The term rural BPO has now vanished. Besides, AI has levelled the playing field. The combination of AI with advantages of being remote – like less attrition, low costs, skilled talent, stable workforce – is changing the game in favour of remote centres."
JK Manivannan | CEO, DESICREW SOLUTIONS

"Only 2-3% of women graduates in small towns go to big cities for jobs. But nearly half of them in rural and remote areas are now graduates. We started over a decade back with the purpose of encouraging women and creating meaningful careers and employment for them."
Sridhar Mitta | CHIEF MENTOR & FOUNDER, NEXTWEALTH ENTREPRENEURS

Sridhar Mitta, chief mentor & founder of NextWealth Entrepreneurs, says AI replaces people, but it also creates new jobs. "We are in the business of doing those new jobs." Mitta, a tech veteran, was the first employee and CTO of Wipro, before co-founding NextWealth to create a wider social impact and offer opportunities for women in remote areas. Around 60% of employees are women. And nearly 80% of the work is now AI-related. Employees are put through three to four months training on AI fundamentals, vertical-specific domains and customer-specific processes before given assignments.

Sathyashree began at NextWealth in December 2023 with no prior experience. Her first project involved creating training datasets for ADAS systems. The work required annotating images and LiDAR data so autonomous vehicle models could better identify objects and driving conditions. She has since moved into the delivery excellence team as an auditor.

Harini, who joined in March 2025, handles cases where the auto-checkout model fails to process transactions.

DesiCrew's Gengashree helps automate client workflows, across insurance and accounting processes. Her team identifies where AI can save time, extract data from PDFs, generate emails, create reports and handle customer tickets faster. One insurance transaction that once took six hours, Manivannan says, was redesigned to close in 30 minutes.

Gengashree joined the company initially on part-time work in 2019, bringing up two daughters, managing home and also acquiring new skills via courses on prompt engineering and AWS, Google certifications. She is now a full-time employee, a team leader, and has also participated in AI hackathons to explore how automation can be applied to client processes.

Shrinidhi Bhat, an associate manager at DesiCrew based in Kapu, Karnataka, has been with the company for 12 years. A commerce graduate from Mangalore University, Bhat is helping move manual operations for a global retailer to automated ones. She has a six-year-old daughter and her husband is a bank employee.

"Remote BPOs already have good talent. What's limited their scale is the need for accent alignment and access to training infrastructure. Accent conversion tech removes both constraints."
Vimal Nair | CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER, KRISP

Accent meets AI

Newer technologies like accent conversion tools are also making it easier for talent in remote areas to engage with global clients. Accent conversion adjusts pronunciation and intonation so the agent is easier to understand. Agents speak as they would and the output is optimised for clarity. Vimal Nair, chief growth officer in Bengaluru-based voice AI solutions company Krisp, says accent conversion removes the need for traditional accent training, and allows agents to focus on problem solving instead of worrying about their accents.

Accent conversion, along with traditional cost advantages, is turning the tide in favour of remote centres. Mitta says costs are around 50% lower than in large cities, while attrition is about 10% annually, compared with roughly 50% in urban BPO centres.

A recent Netflix series pointed to centres in India handling data annotation for pornographic content, impacting small-town households. However, Manivannan says they don't do such work. "And I believe India is not tuned to handle such tasks. If it happens, it's below the radar, in small fly-by-night operations," he says.

The future is no longer about being a cheaper extension of a city centre. It is about being closer to distributed talent, languages, dialects and stable workforces, solving for the world.

NextWealth plans to double its headcount to 10,000 in the next few years, with more AI-related work. DesiCrew is expanding its capabilities in data, automation and AI.

Indian engineers rewrite the code for control systems

Sujit John & Akhil George | TNN

We met Morten Wierod, CEO of the $33-billion electrification and automation group ABB, at a brand new factory the company has set up in Bengaluru. It will focus on a new product category – UPS (uninterruptible power supply) systems for data centres. "We see a very large pipeline now for data centres in India," Wierod tells us.

ABB's next technology leap is being built around data centres and AI. A growing part of that work is also being shaped in India, where the Swedish-Swiss group has built large engineering, R&D and manufacturing capabilities that support both local and global customers.

AI is driving a massive expansion in computing infrastructure, and that is pushing power demand to new levels. The data centre business was less than 1% of ABB's global revenue in 2019, today it is 9%. "It's the fastest growing segment for us, growing almost 35% every year," Wierod says.

While UPS' sit next to the server racks inside a data centre, ABB's bigger business comes from the electrical infrastructure that sits just outside data centres, and which includes substations, medium-voltage switchgear, transformers, low-voltage systems, and power distribution equipment. Large AI data centres now require so much electricity that some are comparable to power plants, generating about 1 gigawatt of power.

MORTEN WIEROD, CEO, ABB: Breaking ground for yet another plant in India. A facility that's just been launched in Bengaluru will focus on producing UPS's for data centres. Data centres is today ABB's fastest growing business

CUTTING-EDGE MADE IN INDIA

But another big shift is happening inside data centres. Nvidia's working towards a new 800-volt DC architecture – from 48/ 54-volt now – to improve power efficiency. That will change how power is delivered to high-density computing racks. Today, racks may consume 100-150 kilowatts. New AI racks could need 1 megawatt.

"We are working with Nvidia to design that next generation of data centres," Wierod says. These data centres are expected in 2028.

Applying AI Across Industries

AI is also changing ABB's own software and automation work. The focus is on applying AI across industries where ABB is strong and therefore has substantial domain knowhow.

A lot of this work, Wierod says, is being led by ABB's team in Bengaluru. The centre has about 4,000 people. Around half work on R&D for new solutions – over 75 patents have come out of this centre – and the other half on project execution for global customers.

One striking example of innovation is a software that helps customers migrate from legacy control systems to new upgraded control systems. These systems are large and complex when used in an offshore platform to control oil & gas production or in refinery management. And customers sometimes want to move to a different brand when upgrading. "Changing such a system is a massive exercise. We had a team in Paris which used to do this conversion in about three months. With the software we've built here, we are now able to do it in half a day," Sanjeev Sharma, MD of ABB India, says.

The India team has also built Genix, an AI layer that sits on top of control systems. Industrial control systems generate large volumes of data from plants. Genix, Sharma says, uses that data to provide deeper insights and help customers make better decisions on production and maintenance.

The India centre has also helped build domain-specific AI agents for sectors like cement, steel and chemicals. These agents are trained on ABB's internal reports, maintenance records and process knowledge.

"If you today ask ChatGPT how to run a cement plant, you don't get very good answers," Wierod says. But ABB's AI agent for cement plants, built using its domain expertise, acts like a first-response service assistant. It can help operators understand control-system issues, give advice, and help ABB engineers identify the right spare parts before visiting a site.

"Teams in India have been core to these advances," he says.

WORLD'S MOST EFFICIENT ELECTRIC MOTOR

India, Morten Wierod says, is ABB's fastest growing market. It's the fourth largest market – behind the US, China and Germany. Wierod thinks India could overtake Germany by 2030. He says the growth in infrastructure – airports, high-speed rail, roads, tunnels, bridges – has been dramatic. "I lived in China from 2008-12 and they had the 4 trillion RMB (renminbi) investment package. And I see a lot of the same trends in India in the last five years," he says.

ABB India has annual revenue of over Rs 13,000 crore, and employs 11,000 people. Wierod says some remarkable manufacturing advancements have been spearheaded by India. "We've made the world's most efficient electric motor ever," he says. It was designed, engineered and manufactured in Vadodara for use in the steel industry. The technology, he says, helped save energy and improve competitiveness.

"I say if you can make it here, you can make it everywhere," he says, echoing Frank Sinatra's song about New York's intensely competitive environment.

An AI cow-collar that's helping raise yield for farmers, dairies

Ardhra.Nair@timesofindia.com

Last September, Mahesh Gangurde was sifting through insurance papers in his office in Nashik, when his phone beeped. The alert said four cows on his farm 80km away in Chandwad were showing reduced rumination. He had lost three cows to delayed detection of diseases in 2024, so Gangurde wasted no time and called up his veterinarian.

The cows were diagnosed with the onset of protozoan disease, the same one that had killed the previous lot. They were put on medication and within six days, they were back to normal without much loss of milk.

Dr Pravin Gavade was attending to patients in his clinic when he got an alert that four of his cows were in silent heat. The alert specified the best period of insemination for each. Three of them are six months pregnant now.

Timely alerts to Zuhaib Pasha in Chikkaballapur in Karnataka helped bring down his veterinarian costs for 15 cows from Rs 11,000 per month to Rs 2,500, and his milk production has stabilised.

All these dairy farmers have in common a collar equipped with sensors that monitor cattle health, provide alerts in case of abnormalities, and indicate the optimal time for insemination. The collar, developed by Pune-based Areete Business Solutions (ABS) and incubated at BAIF Development Research Foundation, has attracted the attention of major dairy industry players, including Amul and Chitale.

ABS is an agri tech firm founded by Srinivas Subramanian and V S Shridhar. Subramanian had worked with Aditya Birla Group, Bajaj Auto, and Crompton Greaves, and Shridhar with IBM and Tata Group.

Srinivas Subramanian (left) and V S Shridhar. Sridhar says their tech predicts heat in cows with 95% accuracy, and health issues with 90% accuracy

Shridhar says they began looking at ideas for farmers in 2016, and zeroed in on cows as they are a source of constant income for farmers, unlike weather-dependent agriculture. "Automations are available for everything after milking the cow, but there is nothing for the animal. India, despite being the largest producer of milk, has a severe shortage of veterinary doctors. The onus is on the farmer to identify issues with the cow, or risk losing it to illness," he says.

Sensors Collect 550 Data Points In Each Cow

Mahesh Gangurde started using the collar in 2024 after three of his cows died. "The doctors told me that if we had brought the cows to them earlier, they could have saved them." He went to bigger dairies to understand how they detect diseases, found some sensor-based collars, but found suppliers only sell in bulk – to farms with more than 100-150 cows.

And then he found ABS. He tested them on his best milk-producing cows, and when he found they worked, he bought for all his 25 cows.

The collar uses four types of sensors – gyroscopes, accelerometer, magnetometer and temperature sensor. They collect 550 data points in the cow, everything from its movement to rumination to health and behaviour. This information is sent to a database, where AI/ML is applied for analysis. If there's an issue, it sends an alert on an app the farmer has on his phone. The system can communicate in nine Indian languages. Since some farmers may miss notifications, ABS employs care managers who call farmers, especially for heat alerts.

Pravin Gavade, who has been using it for the past eight months for his 40 cows (Holstein Friesian and Desi breeds), says the detection of silent heat in cows is the best feature of the app. "If the cow doesn't conceive within a particular time period after calving, then we have to wait a long period to milk her again as lactation happens only after calving," he says.

Chitale Dairy, one of the oldest organised private dairies in the country, collects 10 lakh litres of milk daily through a network of more than 100 milk collection centres from farmers in Sangli, Satara and Kolhapur. Vishwas Chitale, CEO & CTO of the dairy, says since they started using Areete's collar, they've seen a 10% increase in conception rates. "The system has also consistently delivered nearly 93% accuracy in heat prediction, setting a new benchmark in precision and reliability," Chitale says.

ABS collars are much more affordable than imported ones, and work on both cows and buffaloes. Once attached to a cow, Shridhar says, it takes two weeks to capture the cow's movements and other parameters and standardise it to arrive at a baseline for each cow. "Our tech predicts heat in cows with 95% accuracy, and health issues with 90% accuracy," he says.

"We call the collar Ayushman Cowfit. They are helping make decisions on treating diseases and maximising yield."
Bharat Kakade | PRESIDENT AND MANAGING TRUSTEE, BAIF, AT THE AI IMPACT SUMMIT IN NEW DELHI

"The Indian dairy industry has to adopt technology to enhance productivity, animal health, and operational efficiency."
Vishwas Chitale | CEO & CTO, CHITALE DAIRY

"Ayushman Cowfit is like a Fitbit for cows. A farmer gets to know in advance about an animal that may fall sick and can call a vet to have it treated. If the animal comes into heat, he can call the person for artificial insemination ... India today accounts for 24% of the world's milk. With AI at the farmers' level, cows' level, industry level and consumers' level, we will ensure that the country produces at least 30% of the world's milk by 2030."
Amit Vyas | MANAGING DIRECTOR, KAIRA DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' UNION (AMUL DAIRY)

COMPUTER VISION CTRL+F(IND)

Computer vision is a branch of artificial intelligence that enables machines to interpret and understand visual information from the world, much like human sight. It uses algorithms and models—often based on machine learning—to analyse images and video, identify objects, recognise patterns, and make decisions. Applications range from facial recognition and autonomous vehicles to medical imaging and quality inspection in manufacturing.

BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 101 BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 32 | PRICE ₹5

Allyson Felix, 40, the most decorated woman in Olympic athletics history with 11 medals, plans to come out of retirement in a bid to compete at the 2028 Los Angeles Games

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UNIVERSAL'S ROM-COM 'THE CATCH' TO RELEASE IN MAY NEXT YEAR AS EMMA STONE AND CHRIS PINE CLOSE DEALS TO STAR

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Australia moves to tax Meta, Google & TikTok to fund newsrooms

AP

Govt intends to introduce the bill in parliament by July 2 that would create a financial incentive for cos to strike deals with news organisations to pay for journalism

Melbourne: Australia has proposed taxing digital giants Meta, Google and TikTok a proportion of their revenue to pay news reporters. Govt released draft legislation in this regard on Tuesday. Govt intends to introduce the same in parliament by July 2 that would create a financial incentive for the social media companies to strike deals with news organisations to pay for journalism.

Australian PM Anthony Albanese said a monetary value needed to be attached to journalists' work. "It shouldn't just be able to be taken by a large multinational corporation and used to generate profits for that organisation with no compensation appropriate for the people who produce that creative content," Albanese said. "We think that investment in journalism is critical to a healthy democracy," he added.

Digital platforms had been pressured to strike deals with Australian news publishers to pay for journalism by legislation passed in 2021 that created the country's News Media Bargaining Code. The platforms chose to reach commercial deals with news creators rather than be forced into arbitration and have a judge set the price. But they have since avoided renewing those deals by removing news from their services.

The proposed News Bargaining Incentive would charge major platforms that choose not to strike commercial deals with news publishers a 2.25% tax on their Australian revenue. The platforms would be given offsets and their overall costs would be lowered if they agree to pay publishers for journalism, govt said. Govt expects the incentive would raise between 200 to 250 million Australian dollars ($144 million-$179 million) a year.

Govt would distribute that income among news organisations based on how many journalists each organisation employed, communication minister Anika Wells said.

Opposing the proposed legislation, Meta said news organisations "voluntarily post content on our platforms because they receive value from doing so". "The idea that we take their news content is simply wrong. This proposed legislation, which would apply to platforms regardless of whether news content even appears on our services, is nothing more than a digital services tax," Meta said in a statement. AP

Iran in 'state of collapse', pleading for deal: Trump

Strait Of Hormuz Remains Blocked As Report Claims Pak Expecting Tehran To Revise Its Proposal

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday claimed that Iran is "in a state of collapse" and is urgently pleading with Washington to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, projecting an image of a weakened adversary desperately seeking relief. But developments on the ground suggest a far more complex reality: a hardened maritime stand-off in which Tehran is simultaneously demanding that the US lift its naval blockade even as it maintains its own chokehold over the critical waterway. The impasse is now stressing out economies across the world, including in the US itself.

Trump's assertion in a social media post that Iran wants the strait opened "as soon as possible" comes amid indirect contacts between the two sides over de-escalation. Yet analysts tracking the crisis say the facts point not to unilateral Iranian capitulation but to a mutual coercion strategy. The US President has previously made claims that have not been true — such as asserting Iran has agreed to hand over all its "nuclear dust" (enriched uranium).

The divergence between Trump's rhetoric and the operational reality also underscores the information war surrounding the war. While the US emphasises Iranian economic distress — Trump claims the blockade is costing Tehran $500 million a day — Tehran has framed the crisis as resistance against "piracy", accusing the US of unlawfully seizing tankers and weaponising maritime trade. In effect, both sides are blockading each other.

Far from signalling surrender, Iran on Monday proposed reopening the strait under conditions favourable to itself: lifting sanctions and deferring contentious issues such as its nuclear programme. But Trump reportedly rejected a framework that would reopen shipping lanes while "setting aside" nuclear questions, insisting that Iran must address its weapons ambitions as part of any broader deal. The result is a diplomatic deadlock layered atop an active military and economic confrontation.

Mediators in Pakistan, however, expect Iran will submit a revised proposal to end the war in the next few days, CNN reported on Tuesday, citing sources close to mediation process.

The stand-off is reverberating far beyond the Gulf, with oil prices surging above $110 a barrel amid fears of prolonged disruption, and analysts warning of sustained volatility even under optimistic diplomatic scenarios. For Asia— particularly energy-dependent economies like India, Japan, and South Korea — the crisis has tightened supplies and driven up import costs. Europe, already grappling with energy insecurity, faces renewed inflationary pressure.

The US, long cushioned by domestic production, is no longer insulated. Rising global crude prices are feeding into higher gasoline costs at home, with retail fuel prices climbing to fresh highs in recent days, according to market trackers. The political implications are significant for a White House that has made energy affordability a central economic message amid a gloomy outlook in the mid-term elections for the Republican Party.

Compounding the turbulence, the UAE announced Tuesday that it will leave the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), a decision that could reshape the global oil order. The move reflects both economic calculation and geopolitical signalling. The UAE has grown increasingly frustrated with production quotas imposed by the cartel — dominated by Saudi Arabia — and is seeking to ramp up output independently to capitalise on high prices.

The stand-off represents a paradox: both sides professing interest in reopening one of the world's most vital trade arteries, yet neither willing to concede the terms necessary to do so. Until that gap is bridged, the Strait of Hormuz is likely to remain less a conduit for global commerce than a pressure point in a geopolitical contest — one whose consequences are now being felt from restaurants to gas stations.

Bloomberg

(From L) Queen Camilla and King Charles III with US President Trump and First Lady Melania at the White House on Tuesday

US prez hails Britons as 'friends' as king visits

President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that the US has "no closer friends" than the British, as he welcomed King Charles III to the White House on a state visit overshadowed by tensions over the Iran war. In speech during a pomp-filled welcome featuring a 21-gun salute, Trump's tone was a world away from the recent broadsides aimed at Britain's govt for failing to join the conflict with Tehran. "In the centuries since we won our independence, Americans have had no closer friends than the British," said Trump. Using a phrase prized by British govts since Winston Churchill first used it after WWII, Trump said that the two countries had a "special relationship, and we hope it will always remain that way." Trump also praised the British military, saying that "nobody fought better together" with the US — despite recently deriding Britain's two aircraft carriers as "toys." On the second day of the four-day state visit, Charles will later address the US Congress and is expected to call in his speech for "reconciliation and renewal" amid the recent strains in ties. AFP

Iran gives nod to ease Net curbs for businesses

Iran's top security body has approved a temporary scheme for businesses to access the global internet with fewer restrictions, a govt spokesperson told Iranian media on Tuesday, after the authorities had imposed a blackout since the start of the war.

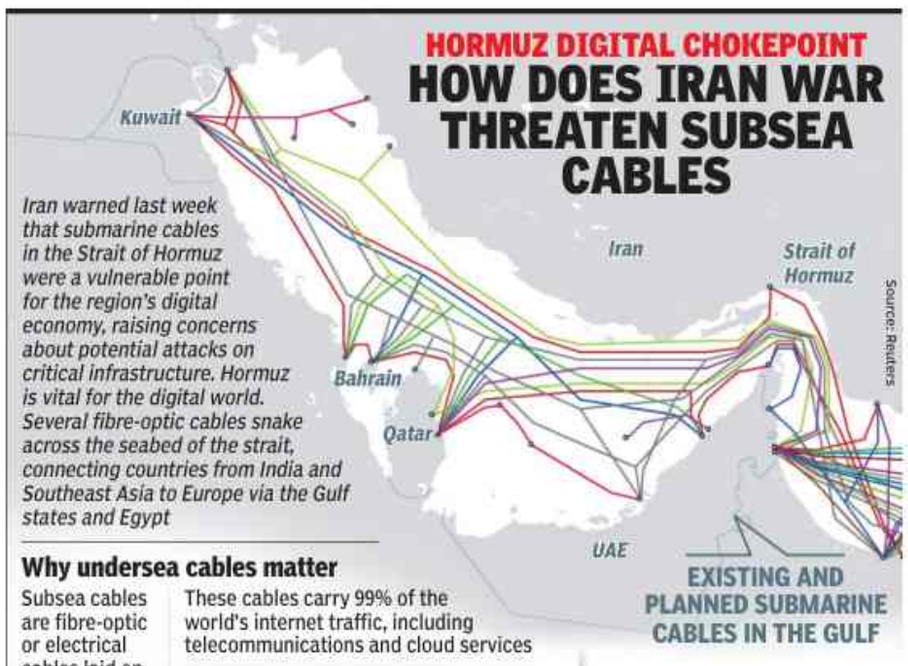
Most Iranians have been unable to access the worldwide web for the last 60 days according to the internet observatory NetBlocks, with only a few citizens having access to expensive and advanced VPNs that circumvent the restrictions.

Govt spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani did not say when the new measures, which had not been previously disclosed by govt, had been introduced. In normal times, access to the global internet remains heavily restricted. REUTERS

HORMUZ DIGITAL CHOKEPOINT

HOW DOES IRAN WAR THREATEN SUBSEA CABLES

Iran warned last week that submarine cables in the Strait of Hormuz were a vulnerable point for the region's digital economy, raising concerns about potential attacks on critical infrastructure. Hormuz is vital for the digital world. Several fibre-optic cables snake across the seabed of the strait, connecting countries from India and Southeast Asia to Europe via the Gulf states and Egypt



EXISTING AND PLANNED SUBMARINE CABLES IN THE GULF

Why undersea cables matter

Subsea cables are fibre-optic or electrical cables laid on the sea floor to transmit data and power

These cables carry 99% of the world's internet traffic, including telecommunications and cloud services

Vital for e-commerce, financial transactions, and the burgeoning AI sectors in the UAE and Saudi Arabia

Vessels in the Strait of Hormuz on Monday

Key risks to infrastructure

- 70–80% of faults to subsea cables are caused by fishing nets and ship anchors
- Active operations increase the risk of 'indirect' damage, such as disabled vessels dragging anchors across cable beds
- Natural threats include undersea currents, earthquakes, and volcanic activity
- State sabotage, while rare, targeted attacks remain a high-level geopolitical concern

Challenge of repairs

- Repair vessels and insurers are reluctant to enter active war zones or areas with potential sea mines
- Securing permits for territorial waters can cause significant delays
- Sunk vessels and debris require extensive sea-floor re-surveying before repairs can safely begin

Are there alternatives?

- Land-based links can provide some backup, but cannot fully replace subsea capacity
- Satellites are more expensive and cannot handle the massive volume of data traffic. Satellites rely on land-based networks and suited for things in motion, like planes & ships

Assassination bid case turns into political noir as US presses criminal charge

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

AFP

Jimmy Kimmel has declined to apologise for his 'expectant widow' jibe at Melania, describing it as 'a very light roast' aimed at highlighting the age difference between them, and not a call for political violence

Washington: US authorities on Tuesday moved forward with criminal charges in what they describe as a third alleged attempt to assassinate President Donald Trump, stemming from a dramatic security breach at the annual White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) dinner.

The incident, which unfolded over the weekend, has deepened an already stark political divide in America, with sharply contrasting reactions across ideological lines and renewed tensions between the Trump administration and late-night television hosts who continue to make light of the incident amid widespread perception that the whole incident was staged.

According to law enforcement officials, the suspect, identified as 32-year-old Cole Allen from California, faces multiple federal charges, including attempted murder of a protected official, weapons violations, and unlawful entry. Authorities allege he attempted to force his way into a secured perimeter near the WHCA event, armed and with stated intent to target the president before the Secret Service intercepted him.

While officials have characterised the threat as credible and serious, public reaction has been anything but unified. Conservative figures and Trump allies have pointed to the incident as evidence of escalating political violence caused by normalisation of threats by Democrats and the liberal media. On the other side, the liberal commentariat has responded with scepticism, with many reeling off instances of Trump himself encouraging and condoning violence against political opponents and critics. Others have treated the incident with dark humour.

The controversy intensified after late-night host Jimmy Kimmel declined to apologise for his jibe in a pre-event parody that Melania was glowing like an expectant widow, describing it as "a very light roast" aimed at highlighting the age difference between them, and not a call for political violence.

The White House, for its part, escalated its tirade against late-night hosts and comedians seen as hostile to the administration, ramping up Trump's call for firing Kimmel. Senior officials have hinted at possible regulatory scrutiny of networks and renewed calls to hold media companies "accountable" for what they describe as inflammatory content.

Beyond the political fallout, the episode has also underscored a growing sense of public fatigue with the constant drama and political theatre in Washington DC. Despite the gravity of the allegations, there has been a lack of sustained national focus, with coverage competing against a crowded news cycle.

In fact, the press itself was the butt of jokes with several comics brutally calling out media executives who were seen spiriting away wine bottles that were to be served at the WHCA dinner before it was aborted by the security breach. As one wag noted, nothing sums up Washington elite better than fleeing gunfire with a souvenir pinot noir; and even as the Secret Service is yelling "Get down! Get down", some reporters are like "Cabernet first!"

B'desh's first N-power plant starts fuel loading

Ahsan Tasnim

Dhaka: Bangladesh on Tuesday entered the era of nuclear power generation as its Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant began fuel loading in its VVER-1200 reactor — the latest Russian Gen III+ pressurised water reactor technology that India too is looking at for its future nuclear power projects, including for new units at Kudankulam.

RUSSIAN CONNECTION

Fuel loading was done for the first unit of the plant in Pabna, around 160 km from capital Dhaka. Built by Russia's state-run nuclear corporation Rosatom, the 2.4 GW plant (2 x 1200 MW units) aims at providing 10-12% of the country's electricity. The first unit will be formally and legally transferred to Bangladesh for operations before 2026-end.

Rooppur NPP will play a vital role in ensuring national energy security, accelerating industrialisation and fostering growth of a technology-driven economy, said science and technology minister Fakir Mahbub Anam of the project being built at a cost of around $13 billion, with Russia providing a state loan covering 90% of that.

The loading phase is the first in the unit's commissioning stage and will be followed by bringing the reactor to a stable controllable power level. Officials said generation will start at low levels with full output not expected until 2027.

In India, Kudankulam — that already has two Russian VVER 1000 pressurised water reactors in commercial operation since 2014 — will have two further units — 7 and 8 with larger VVER-1200 reactors — as proposed for the fourth phase of the plant. Last year, Rosatom had said the technical specifications for construction of a new Russian-designed nuclear power plant in India with VVER-1200 reactor units are currently being prepared.

Gulf leaders meet in Saudi to discuss Iran war's fallout

Riyadh: Saudi Arabia hosted leaders and officials from across the Gulf on Tuesday to discuss the ongoing crisis in the region. The talks in the coastal city of Jeddah come as the White House considers Iran's latest proposal to end the two-month-old conflict.

"During the summit, a number of topics and issues related to regional and international developments were discussed, as well as the coordination of efforts in response to them," Saudi press agency reported. A source close to the govt said that "the current political and security situation in the region" was being discussed during the summit. AFP

N Korea confirms suicide rule for soldiers in Ukraine

North Korean leader **Kim Jong-un** confirmed a policy that requires soldiers to end their lives on the battlefield to avoid capture, while fighting Russia's war against Ukraine. Speaking at an event to inaugurate a memorial in Pyongyang for North Koreans who have died in action, Kim twice mentioned soldiers who had "self-blasted," according to a report by the Korean Central News Agency.

"Heroes who unhesitatingly opted for self-blasting, suicide attack, in order to defend the great honour" were praised by Kim in the speech given to bereaved families and top Russian officials. "They did not expect any compensation, though they performed distinguished feats," he added. "They died a heroic death."

Kim signed a pact with President Putin in 2024 that included a mutual defence provision. South Korean and western intelligence agencies have since estimated Pyongyang has sent at least 10,000 soldiers and tens of thousands of containers of weapons to help Russia fight Ukraine. The disclosure by Kim follows reports that North Korean troops captured by Ukraine were required to kill themselves. Those accounts cited both Ukrainian intelligence and a captured North Korean soldier. BLOOMBERG

Qatar warns against 'frozen conflict' in Gulf

Doha: Qatar on Tuesday cautioned against the possibility of a "frozen conflict" in the Gulf, as talks between the US and Iran for a peace deal appeared at an impasse. "We do not want to see a return to hostilities in the region anytime soon, we do not want to see a frozen conflict that ends up being thawed every time there is a political reason," Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari said at a press conference. "We are very keen to see an end to this war that is sustainable, that takes into account all of our concerns in the region and beyond," Ansari added. AFP

N-issue is at heart of 2-month war in Iran

▶Continued from P1

He rejected the US criticism as "baseless and politically motivated".

The conference runs until May 22. India, Pakistan and Israel remain outside the NPT, calling it discriminatory.

UN secretary general Antonio Guterres said the treaty is eroding as "drivers of proliferation are accelerating" and that humanity faces rising nuclear risk. "Nuclear threat is increasing thanks to new technologies," he said, adding that nuclear tests are back on the table and the number of nuclear warheads is on the rise for the first time in decades.

The clash marked a rare opening-day confrontation at the NPT review meeting, with both sides trading allegations over nuclear conduct.

The nuclear issue has been at the heart of the two-month war between Iran and the US and Israel, with US President Trump reiterating on Sunday that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon. Iran has long demanded that Washington acknowledge its right to enrich uranium, which Tehran says it only seeks for peaceful purposes, but which Western powers say could be used to make nuclear weapons. Iran has insisted it does not seek nuclear weapons. But the IAEA and the US intelligence community separately assessed that Tehran had a nuclear weapons development programme that it shuttered in 2003.

New evacuations in Lebanon even as Israel says 'no territorial ambitions'

Israel on Tuesday said it was not seeking to take territory in Lebanon, as its military issued a wave of new evacuation warnings for towns and villages in the battle-scarred south. Israel has been fighting Hezbollah since early March, sending troops into south Lebanon to battle the Iran-backed militant group, with the violence ongoing despite a shaky April 17 ceasefire. "Israel has no territorial ambitions in Lebanon. Our presence... serves one purpose: protecting our citizens," foreign minister Gideon Saar told a news conference. "No country would be willing to live in such a way with a gun pointed to its head," he said, as the military pressed its operations in Lebanon against Iran-backed Hezbollah. AFP

Starmer averts ethics probe over Mandelson appointment but faces more pressure

London: British PM Keir Starmer on Tuesday averted a parliamentary inquiry over his choice of Peter Mandelson, a friend of Jeffrey Epstein, as British ambassador to Washington, but failed to quell questions about whether he bent the rules to make the controversial appointment.

On Tuesday, lawmakers voted 335 to 223 against asking the Committee of Privileges to investigate whether Starmer had misled the House of Commons on several matters, including by saying "full due process" had been followed around the appointment. If the committee had found Starmer deliberately misled parliament, he would have been expected to resign.

Starmer had criticised the attempt, led by the opposition Conservative Party Leader Kemi Badenoch, to launch an investigation, calling it a political stunt timed to sway voters before local and regional elections on May 7. He ordered lawmakers in his centre-left Labour Party to oppose an investigation, resulting in the overwhelming rejection. Badenoch said it was a sign of Starmer's weakness that he had to use such an order.

Reuters

Starmer's (in pic) former chief of staff, Morgan McSweeney, acknowledged Tuesday he'd made a 'serious mistake' by recommending Mandelson

Reverberations from the appointment of Mandelson have left Starmer fighting for his job, and at odds with his civil service. Starmer is angry he wasn't told that Mandelson had failed security vetting, while officials say they felt pressure from Starmer's office to confirm the appointment quickly at the start of President Trump 's second term.

Starmer's former chief of staff, Morgan McSweeney, acknowledged Tuesday he'd made a "serious mistake" by recommending Mandelson, but denied pressuring officials to ignore security concerns. McSweeney told lawmakers on the house of commons' foreign affairs committee that "the prime minister relied on my advice, and I got it wrong." He apologised to Epstein's victims, saying "I am sorry for any part this controversy has played in causing further hurt or distress."

Starmer fired Mandelson in Sept after new details emerged about the ambassador's friendship with Epstein.

McSweeney resigned in Feb saying he took responsibility for the ambassadorial appointment. McSweeney said that he felt Mandelson's experience as a former European Union trade commissioner would helped in striking a trade deal with the Trump administration. "I don't think the prime minister would have chosen Mandelson if Kamala Harris had been elected president," McSweeney said. AGENCIES

WORLD DIGEST

Rescuers recover last victims from Indonesia train wreck that killed 15

Rescuers finished removing victims from a damaged commuter train car on Tuesday, confirming that the crash outside Indonesia's capital killed 15 people, all of whom were women. The crash occurred Monday when a long-distance train crashed into the rear car of the stopped commuter train at Bekasi Timur Station outside Jakarta. The car was one designated for women only, a common accommodation to stop harassment. A total of 88 injured people were taken to hospitals for treatment, said Bobby Rasyidin, CEO of state-owned railway company PT Kereta Api Indonesia. The bodies of the dead were taken to a hospital for further identification. Rescue teams completed the evacuation of all victims from inside the wreckage about midmorning. All 240 passengers on the Argo Bromo Anggrek long-distance train were safe, officials said.

Man pleads guilty to plotting attack on a Taylor Swift concert in Vienna

A man accused of pledging allegiance to the Islamic State group and plotting to attack one of superstar singer Taylor Swift's concerts in Vienna nearly two years ago pleaded guilty as his trial began on Tuesday, his lawyer said. The plot was thwarted, but Austrian authorities still cancelled Swift's three performances in Aug 2024. The defendant, a 21-year-old Austrian citizen known only as Beran A. in line with Austrian privacy rules, faced charges including terrorist offences and membership in a terrorist organisation. He could be sentenced to up to 20 years in prison, and has been in custody since Aug 2024.

BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO. 101 BENGALURU | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 32 | PRICE ₹5

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